

# Planning for a Sustainable Society

Institutional Reform &  
Social Transformation

by

Janis Birkeland, BA (1966), MA (1972), JD (1979)

## ABSTRACT

This work provides a critical overview of the land use and environmental planning (Planning) system in the wider context of the social and institutional transformation that is necessary to create a sustainable society. I theorize why and how ecologically-damaging decisions concerning public resource allocation are made, and suggest how the decision-making system can be reformed. To do this, I articulate and further develop a new social paradigm, ecofeminism, as an analytical framework for de/reconstructing the Planning system.

Planning, the 'visible hand' of government, is the resource allocation arena that has the potential to prevent destructive conflict over resources. It can provide the long-term, rational, ethics-based and participatory decision-making process that is required for sustainable resource allocation. The other public decision-making systems, in particular, the market and political arenas, by their very nature, lack one or more of these characteristics. Private markets can create diverse commodities and opportunities for investments and 'consumer choices', but cut off more basic social choices in the long term. Unlike Planning, they cannot protect the environment, despite the claims of economic rationalists.

As currently designed and conceived, however, Planning has also proven incapable of expanding social choice, protecting the environment, and ensuring sustainable development. Planning has been criticized as ineffectual by both sides of the political spectrum: those calling for more planning and those calling for less. This failure, I suggest, is because it has been geared toward mitigating the *consequences* of 'unplanned' and often irreversible decisions in the political and market arenas. When seen as an institution, the present Planning system could be said to be inherently biased against environmental preservation. I argue that this is due to the power-based institutions (Patriarchy) and intellectual framework (Power Paradigm) in which Planning theory and practice evolved.

Because the existing Planning system is structured on Patriarchal premises, structures, and concepts, it cannot address the underlying causes of environmental conflict. A new decision-making system that is capable of fostering a truly ecological ethic cannot be created within the reforms being offered either by progressive planners or mainstream greens. This is because their problem analyses do not go deep enough; a total rethink is necessary. This work is intended to contribute to this rethink. Its main purpose is to lay the groundwork for the kind of *preventative* Planning system that is necessary to create a sustainable society.

A proposal to guide the redesign of the system of environmental governance is offered to generate public debate. Because Planning theory and practice reflects and reinforces the Patriarchal society at large, however, institutional reform cannot be achieved in isolation from fundamental social change. I argue that ecofeminism also provides a comprehensive framework for the development of strategies for social transformation more generally.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## PREVIOUS PUBLICATIONS

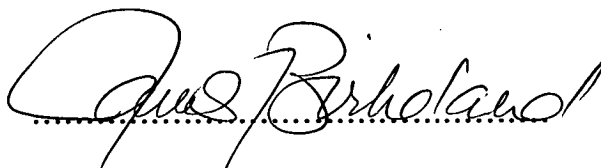
Parts of the material presented in this work have appeared, usually in different form, in previous publications: 1993, "Linking Theory & Practice", in Greta Gaard, ed., *Ecofeminism: Living Interconnections with Animals and Nature* (PA: Temple U. Press ); 1993, 2; 1993, "Organic Playgardens", *Conference proceedings of the International Association for the Child's Right to Play*, (University of Melbourne: Melbourne); 1993, "Government and Environment", *Ecopolitics VII Proceedings* (Griffith University: Brisbane); 1993, "Some Pitfalls of 'Manstream', Environmental Theory and Practice", *The Environmentalist* 13 (4) pp. 97-109; 1993, "A Guide to Growing Greenies Organically", *Ecopolitics VII Proceedings* (Griffith University: Brisbane); 1993, "Language and Institutional determinism", *Ecopolitics VII Proceedings* (Griffith University: Brisbane); 1992, "Economic Determinism", *Ecopolitics VI Conference Proceedings* (RMIT: Melbourne); 1992, "Ecofeminist Praxis", *Ecopolitics VI Conference Proceedings* (RMIT: Melbourne); 1991, "An Ecofeminist Critique of Manstream Planning", *The Trumpeter: Journal of Ecosophy* 8 (2) pp. 72-84; 1991, "Ecofeminism and Ecopolitics", *Proceedings of Ecopolitics V* (University of NSW: Sydney); 1991, "Tasmania: The Story" (An analysis of Green Politics), *Proceedings of Ecopolitics V* (University of NSW: Sydney); 1988, "Redefining the Environmental Problem", *Environmental and Planning Law Journal* 5 (2) (June) pp. 109-133; 1985, "Playground Design: Cliches & Common Sense", *Architecture Australia* . (Reprinted by *Australian Parks & Recreation*, Summer 86/87, pp. 40-45.)



## DEDICATION

This effort is in memory of Dr. Dick Jones who founded the Centre for Environmental Studies, and to Karen, Joe, Phil, and all the other wonderful greenies who missed their full turn. It dedicated to the fantasy that some day my grandchild will find this work on their parent's shelf, dust it off, skim its pages, and say: "how obvious ... I can't believe people in grandma's day thought this stuff was radical".

Signed,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Janis Birkeland". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a dotted line.

Janis Lynn Birkeland, submitted May 1993

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## SYNOPSIS AND OBJECTIVES

This work provides a critical overview of the land use and environmental planning (Planning) system in the wider context of the social and institutional transformation that is necessary to create a sustainable society. I theorize why and how ecologically-damaging decisions concerning public resource allocation are made, and suggest how the decision-making system can be reformed. To do this, I articulate and further develop a new social paradigm, ecofeminism, as an analytical framework for de/reconstructing the Planning system. A proposal to guide the design of a system of environmental governance is offered to generate public debate. Because Planning theory and practice reflects and reinforces the Patriarchal society at large, however, institutional reform cannot be achieved in isolation from social change. I argue that ecofeminism also provides a comprehensive framework for the development of strategies for social transformation more generally.

### Institutional change

Planning, the 'visible hand' of government, is the resource allocation arena that has the potential to prevent destructive social conflict over resources. It can provide the long-term, rational, ethics-based and participatory decision-making process that is required for sustainable resource allocation. The other public decision-making systems, in particular, the market and political arenas, by their very nature, lack one or more of these characteristics. Private markets can create diverse commodities, opportunities for investments, and 'consumer choices', but cut off basic 'social choices' in the long term. Unlike Planning, they cannot protect the environment, despite the claims of economic rationalists.

As currently designed and conceived, however, Planning has also proven incapable of expanding social choice, protecting the environment, and ensuring sustainable development. Planning has been criticized as ineffectual by both sides of the political spectrum: those calling for more planning and those calling for less. This failure, I suggest, is because it has been geared toward mitigating the *consequences* of 'unplanned' and often irreversible decisions in the political and market arenas. When seen as an institution, the present Planning system could be said to be inherently biased against environmental preservation. I argue that this is due to the power-based<sup>1</sup> institutions (Patriarchy) and intellectual framework (Power Paradigm) in which Planning theory and practice evolved.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'power-based' includes both dominance and hierarchy. When applied to institutions, it means shaped by power relations and/or favouring the powerful.

Because the existing Planning system is structured on Patriarchal premises, structures, and concepts, it cannot address the underlying causes of environmental conflict. A new decision-making system that is capable of fostering a truly ecological ethic cannot be created within the reforms being offered either by progressive planners or mainstream greens. This is because their problem analyses do not go deep enough; a total rethink is necessary. This work is intended to contribute to this rethink. Its main purpose is to lay the groundwork for the kind of *preventative* Planning system that is necessary to create a sustainable society.

Among other things, this institutional reconstruction requires:

(1) A redefinition of the environmental problem. For practical purposes, I contend that the crux of the environmental problem can most usefully be understood in terms of the *abuse of power*. That is, if one thing can be said to link environmental destruction and the pathological 'isms' that contribute to it (consumerism, industrialism, racism, capitalism, sexism, colonialism) - it is the abuse of power. Power seeking is fundamentally linked to the environmental crisis as obtained through the control, exploitation, and consumption of social and natural resources (money and status being means to obtain 'power'). The evolution of power relationships has led to the transfer of resources from public to corporate interests (at below real cost). This in turn leads to a spiral of environmental destruction, social injustice, and conflict.

Such a problem definition has markedly different consequences to the conventional treatment of environmental problems as 'the need to balance competing interests' in resource management and allocation. It is also significantly different to the 'radical' green position which calls for 'extending the ethics of egalitarianism to include nature'.

An ecofeminist paradigm helps to expose how false dualisms conceal hierarchical power relationships in the resource allocation system to the advantage of the powerful. For example, one reason for Planning failure is the ideological bias wherein Planning ('command') has been defined as the polar opposite of the market ('freedom'). 'Them versus us' thinking conceals the actual relationship between the two spheres, disguises the hierarchical nature of the modern corporatist state, and blocks creative alternatives to, or combinations of, the two systems of social choice. (I show that this conventional dualistic model of resource allocation is reinforced and legitimized by Patriarchal ideology; specifically, hierarchical dualism and the androcentric model of Man.)

(2) A realignment of the major public decision-making institutions for resource allocation - the political, legal, market and Planning arenas ('superstructure'). One antidote of the manipulation of the market/Planning dichotomy is to demonstrate that alternative models of government exist which could be easily implemented given the political will. I propose a modification that would bring the structure of government closer in substance to the original

democratic intent. The new tri-partite structure of environmental governance proposed would allow us to address environmental (ethical) as well as social (distributional) issues. The model is primarily designed to constrain the potential for the abuse of power. In a sense, it 'rationalizes' the social decision-making system by re-aligning 'rights', 'wants', and 'needs' with the appropriate decision-making forum - democracy, market, and Planning respectively (with the law, as now, determining legal and jurisdictional disputes). The model exposes the need to redesign all these institutions so that they better correspond to their logical functions within the resource allocation system. This work, however, focuses on Planning.

(3) A reconstruction of the Planning system itself ('structure'). Next, I address the actual present functions of planning, as an institution, and suggest more appropriate ones. Planning is often attacked as constraining development, yet it subsidizes development and promotes inappropriate growth in many ways. This paradox is partly explained by the fact that economic planners who are involved in facilitating growth or *production*, are associated in the public imagination with physical planners who are primarily involved in regulating *consumption*. I propose to amalgamate these two systems so that the costs of subsidies and the distribution of externalities could be linked directly to environmental impacts and thus made more 'visible' to the general public. Production would thus be linked to conservation in a more rational manner.

(4) A redesign of the methods and processes of Planning practice ('infrastructure'). I examine how (even progressive) planners have adopted paradigms and concepts that derive from business administration and economics. The result is a Planning method that resembles a 'cost-benefit analysis' system writ large. That is, it is designed for 'balancing' and 'choosing' among development proposals. This is biased, ultimately, against keeping social options open and preserving the natural environment. Redefining the purpose of Planning as, say, 'designing a sustainable society' would result in different Planning methods than one based on making decisions. That latter prioritizes (Masculine) decisiveness over the precautionary principle. Such a purpose as creating a sustainable future would require an *ethics-based* decision-making system, rather than a rights-based one. It means that Planning methods themselves would be based on ethical/ecological principles - in contrast to new policies or techniques being implemented within the existing decision-making paradigm.

(5) A feminist analysis of mainstream planning theory. Because of the androcentric interpretation of society and human nature, both conservative and radical Planning theories focus on what is deemed to be 'rational' (read Masculine) behaviour. Even the politics of planning is analyzed as a 'rational' (read self-interested) struggle among competing sectional interests (classes or interest groups), to achieve a desired policy or plan, or to obtain the power to implement it. Their analyses therefore largely ignore the personal and psycho-sexual dimension which reproduce power relationships. This explains why Planning theories only deal with means of providing for physical needs and goals. Plans and policies fail to address

emotional needs that are just as 'real' (but for the Patriarchal prism). Thus, Planning has tended to reinforce the sense of alienation and loss of connection between individuals, the community, and the environment.

### **Social change**

Even if such 'radical' but simple institutional reforms were instituted, however, they would come to nought in a Patriarchal society. This is because sustainability - which requires environmental protection, social justice, and peace - ultimately necessitates creating a society that is *beyond power*. In Patriarchal society, dominance relationships are seen as necessary to maintain social order, or, at least an inevitable result of human (read Male) behaviour. Thus Patriarchal ideology legitimizes power seeking and hence the abuse of power. (A non-Patriarchal culture could theoretically have led to an environmental crisis stemming from other imbalances or cultural pathologies such as, perhaps, tribalism or religious views that are not compatible with environmental sustainability. However, in present times, the belief systems that militate against nature are integral to Patriarchal cosmology.) Fundamental social transformation is therefore necessary. This entails, among other things:

#### (5) New analyses of the causes of the abuse of power

If we want to find the causes and cures for the abuse of power, we must turn to feminism, especially ecofeminism, as it is the only political analysis that looks squarely at power. Ecofeminists call for 'power to' or empowerment, as opposed to 'power over' or dominance. Other theories (liberalism, socialism, and so on) are concerned in the main with redistributing power and thus fail to address many 'blind spots' in the culture that conceal the operation and maintenance of power relations. Gender-blindness is power-blindness. For example, Mainstream theories fail to look deeply enough at the links between the psychological and structural or what *motivates* the abuse of power.

How does a feminist analysis account for the abuse of power? I suggest that the abuse of power relates to repressed and unfulfilled *emotional* needs (love, sex, belonging) that have been systematically denied in our androcentric (male-centred) culture. When such powerful emotional needs are unfulfilled, there is a tendency to compensate indirectly for what is wanting through an unselfconscious drive for power and other behavioural pathologies. This 'displacement' through power seeking (by acquiring money, status and influence) reinforces dominance relationships and hence the abuse of power at the social level as well.

### (6) New strategies for social transformation.

A paradigm is only as useful as the strategies it suggests for social change. I argue that the efforts of Manstream<sup>1</sup> greens have largely failed (relative to the increasing speed and scale of destruction) because of the gender-blindness and androcentrism in environmental theory and practice. Since humanity - being conceived of as Male - is *by definition* rational and self-interested, greens tend to describe the human behaviour that underlies environmental destruction as misguided self-interest. Thus, they tend to focus on 'human chauvinism' or 'greed' as the primary culprits (these being, of course, 'rational' or self-interested motives). Green strategies for social transformation thus fail to look at the non-rational motivations that cause people - particularly the powerful - to change their power-seeking behaviour (let alone to abuse power in the first place). Manstream greens tend to assume that people can be either persuaded to alter their values, institutions, and behaviours through argument and reason, or be motivated to change by appeals to self-interest ("to harm the earth is to harm oneself). But rational or spiritual forms of persuasion do not address what really motivates people. People are motivated to act, I would suggest, through *emotional needs*, not reason. I must point out that the irony of using reason to argue that this approach is misguided has not escaped me. However, in order to argue that there is a flaw in someone's logic, it is necessary to use that same form of logic to do so.

Green strategies have also failed because they depend upon building a movement to bring about social change. This is because many greens remain trapped in the liberal, androcentric interpretation of 'Man' and society (though many eschew liberalism). Consequently, they conceive of the environmental crisis as one of competing *values*. To many greens, the politics of saving the planet means engaging in an intellectual or spiritual competition for the hearts, minds, or votes of the general public. As a direct result of mainstream green politics, 'activism' - by which I mean unpaid volunteers, campaigners, and people engaging in direct action - has declined dramatically of late.

In contrast, an ecofeminist praxis does not depend on the 'conversion' of others to a particular world view or ideology. It does not require building the biggest movement by winning arguments, winning converts, or winning power - all of which generate countervailing forces. Instead, it suggests we look at how to both expose and heal the repressed emotional needs in Patriarchal society, the denial and displacement of which has contributed to an excessive need for physical gratification and power.

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<sup>1</sup> I use the term 'Manstream', as distinct from mainstream, to refer to *non-feminist* radical green theories. Mainstream refers simply to non-radical theories. 'Manstream' indicates that non-feminist radical green thought has retained certain androcentric premises and biases found in mainstream thought.

## Conclusion

Whether or not the particular ideas that emerge from this initial exploration prove useful, they should hopefully generate debate on what I consider to be some of the present blind spots and taboos in our culture that are blocking our understanding of environmental problems and solutions. The subtext of this work is that feminist approaches are *not* marginal, irrational, and insubstantial, contrary to the way they are still portrayed. Adding feminist analysis to an ecological perspective ('ecofeminism') cannot narrow that perspective. Rather, it broadens and deepens our analysis and strategy where Manstream theories have apparently come to a dead end. Part II tests the utility of ecofeminism for suggesting new concepts for institutional reform. Part III tests the utility of ecofeminism for suggesting new strategies for social transformation.

## Objectives

Although the analysis and proposals may appear 'radical', I believe they come closer than the present institutional system to a framework that can foster the 'conservative', or liberal ideals of individual freedom and choice, as well as revive the notion of 'community' as a constitutive element of society. In fact, an ecofeminist analysis of Planning leads to a constitutional framework designed to provide checks and balances to prevent the abuse of power. The central difference between my proposal and that of other constitutional democracies is that it takes into account the natural environment, as well as people and society. I do not, of course, claim that the model could in fact solve the environmental crisis - let alone that it would ever be implemented. The objectives of this project are far more humble.

(a) The dramatic social changes that are needed cannot come about unless it is widely recognized that our intellectual and institutional constructs are fundamentally flawed. The project makes the case for fundamental social reform - a Western 'perestroika'.

(b) Planning is essential to the preservation of the natural environment and for that matter, human survival. This project draws attention to the need for a new type of Planning that will allow us to create a safe, secure future.

(c) It is not enough to provide a future vision. To develop strategies for social action, it is also important to understand a problem in context and with an awareness of cultural and institutional constraints. This project attempts to provide a comprehensive picture of the parameters of institutional reform while showing the reasoning that led to the proposed alternative.

(d) The roots of the environmental problem cannot be meaningfully addressed without an analysis of militarism, as militarism can nullify any planning for sustainable development. This

project therefore develops an ecofeminist perspective that integrates both the military and industrial roots of the environmental crisis.

(e) By definition, a paradigm is neither incorrect or correct, but is measured by its instrumental value. Non-feminist paradigms, however, fail to expose certain blind spots in contemporary culture that are crucial impediments to resolving the environmental problems.

(f) Egalitarianism between humans, future generations and nature is the dominant approach to the resolution of the environment crisis in ecophilosophy. Egalitarianism as a paradigm (rather than as a value) is inadequate, because it leads to methodologies that involve interest balancing, or a trade off between human and non-human interests.

(g) There is a need to cross-pollinate environmental theory and activism in order to facilitate social transformation. This project seeks to draw from academic theory what is useful for environmental activism and to draw from my experience, as both an activist and professional, what is useful to theory.

(h) There is little, if any, discussion in the wider green movement of the need for substantive Planning reform, let alone broader institutional reform. The emphasis has been on appropriate policies. This project tries to encourage such a debate by establishing an approach that links analysis, principles, and reform.



## **PART I: SCOPE, NATURE AND INTENT OF THE PROJECT**

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## Premises

Feminists have long recognized that 'objectivity' is a false concept, as "those of us with bodies must always occupy a particular position in terms of class, colour, sexuality, or any number of social and historical variables".<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it is fitting that I begin by explaining where I am 'coming from'. Before moving to Tasmania, I worked as an architect, city planner and attorney in San Francisco, California. During the 1970s, I was involved in several areas related to environmental planning, including land use planning, urban design, planning law, advocacy planning, major project evaluation, and environmental mediation. I was interested in exploring these areas because it seemed obvious that some form of environmental planning was essential to prevent the adverse cumulative impacts of inappropriate development. However, I gradually came to realize that the land use and environmental planning (Planning) system - as presently conceived - could at best only retard the eventual despoliation of the 'natural' world.<sup>2</sup> My experience as a planner convinced me that there was a fundamental misfit between the environmental problem and the inherent nature of the Planning system, in both theory and practice. I still believe that Planning is the form of resource allocation that has the potential to prevent (negative) conflict over resources - but only if the institutional framework within which planners operate is redesigned 'from scratch'. This project explores means of designing a Planning system that would have greater potential to protect the natural environment and improve our quality of life.

I take as self-evident that wilderness and human well being are inseparable. The underlying premise of this work is encapsulated in Henry Thoreau's famous words: "In wilderness is the preservation of the world". I do not buy into the current debate (in some circles) over whether 'wilderness' itself is a valid concept. It may be true that the very idea of wilderness is a construct of Western culture which can be construed as racist, elitist and tending to reinforce the nature/culture duality. However, over-intellectualizing wilderness to the point that we fail to preserve it on ideological grounds is also highly idealist, if not stupid. The debate itself is a

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<sup>1</sup> Greta Gaard, 1992, as yet unpublished book review of both Eckersley, 1992, *Environmentalism and Political Theory* and Rensenbrink, 1992, *The Greens and the Politics of Transformation*.

<sup>2</sup> For the pedantic, I acknowledge that there is no 'natural' environment now, in the sense that everything has the imprint of industrial processes upon it (even the Antarctic is polluted). Likewise, I realize that humans are inextricably a part of nature so that arguably anything - even global destruction - can be termed 'natural'. For purposes of this work, however, I use the terms 'nature' and 'natural' in their everyday meaning; that is, not Man-made.

'red herring'. It is enough to preserve what remnants of the relatively 'natural' environment are left simply on the grounds that it is there.

I am of the conviction that nothing short of a radical transformation of our civilization is needed to prevent the current mass extinction rate of flora and fauna, including humans. In many respects, then, my position coincides with that of 'greens', a term which encompasses the diverse perspectives of those who consider nature to have intrinsic value, and see social justice, peace, environmental quality and non-violence as inseparable issues.<sup>1</sup> Greens consider the heart of the environmental problem to be a crisis of both character and culture. Thus, a sustainable society cannot be developed without fundamental personal and social transformation. This transformation involves a reconsideration of our relationship with each other, nature and the cosmos, and cultivating new ways of thinking, relating and acting. While I am a green, however, I challenge certain aspects of the dominant (non-feminist) position in green theory, and suggest that green strategy has been impeded by vestiges of Manstream thought. In fact, central to my position is that green theory that is not informed by feminist thought is merely part of the problem.

In this work, I concentrate upon Planning (primarily at the regional level) in relation to 'substantively irrational' social policies. As we are largely concerned with 'rationality', we need to understand what it means. My starting point is that individual and community well being requires personal, social, and ecological sustainability (which logically entails peace, social justice, and environmental quality). Sustainability is therefore a rational, as well as a subjective, social goal. Humans cannot survive independently of the environment, and other life forms are constituent elements of the ecosystem. We need them. It follows from this that social decisions or decision-making systems that are (unnecessarily) destructive of the ecology or ecosystems or other species can be considered 'irrational', as they are inherently unsustainable. This is true even if we adhere to an anthropocentric (or human-centred, as opposed to biocentric) value system, as to harm nature is to harm ourselves.

Since individual well being depends upon a viable community and ecology, I equate 'substantive' rationality (legitimate ends) with social/ecological sustainability. This is in keeping with traditional lay and academic conceptions of rationality, both of which are generally based on self-interest (eg. if given the choice, it is 'rational' to choose a dollar over a penny, as one is better off with a dollar). It is also in keeping with the conventional moral implication of the human capacity for reason: the obligation to exercise 'reasonableness' towards others, which surely includes other species.

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<sup>1</sup> I distinguish the political arm ('Greens') from the broader movement (greens) by capitalizing the former.

The equation of rationality and sustainability that I make here is applicable to institutions as well as individuals. If an institutional system or the policies it implements militate against a sustainable society and ecosphere, then that institution should also be considered an irrational one (as well as corrupted). The proposition that our social decision-making system is as a whole 'irrational' is reasonable when we consider the exponential growth in environmental problems. Nonsustainable practices can hardly be in our collective self-interest - even in the short term. The collapse of the global life support system may even occur within the life span of most people that are alive today. It is clear, for example, that forest practices are unsustainable. Native forests are still being allocated to production, and native forests cannot be logged 'sustainably'. At present logging rates, most native forests will be gone within my lifetime.<sup>1</sup> In fact, at current rates, the world's tropical rainforests will have all but disappeared in 25 years,<sup>2</sup> and here in Tasmania, scientists have warned that the local native forests are being felled at the same rates as those in the Amazon.<sup>3</sup> Yet, as we charge toward the precipice, we cling to the myth of Rational Man<sup>4</sup>: a myth which has played a part in bringing us to such a pass.

Planning is generally conceived of as a rational form of decision-making with regard to the future. In fact, planning and rationality are often defined in nearly identical terms. But if anything is irrational, it is surely a decision-making institution that is an integral part of a nonsustainable social system. I therefore allocate little discussion to Planning structures and practices which (arguably) conform to the textbook ideal of 'procedural rationality'. Those, to the extent they exist in reality, are already comprehensively theorized in Planning literature.

The continued destruction of our public health, safety, and life support system on the faith that the invisible hand of technology and the market (or perhaps divine intervention) will save us at the brink is, quite foolhardy in terms of 'procedural' rationality (legitimate means) as well. There can only be disagreement over what is causing humanity's stampede toward ecosystem collapse and what kind of fundamental changes are in order. It is hoped that this work will make a contribution to the debate on these two questions.

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<sup>1</sup> "Over the last 30 years in Australia, the timber industry has nearly doubled the amount of timber it extracts. In that same period, the timber industry has nearly halved the number of people it employs. If woodchipping continues at its present rate, our unprotected native forests could be destroyed in 20 years." Howard Stringer, 1992, "Chip chip: you tell a Little Lie...." *Wilderness News* 128 (June/July) pp. 20-21.

<sup>2</sup> For a recent list of social and environmental disasters, see Paul Ekins, Mayer Hillman, and Robert Hutchinson, 1992, *Wealth Beyond Measure: An Atlas of New Economics* (London: Gaia Books) chapter 1; and Frank Barnaby, ed., 1988, *The Gaia Peace Atlas: Survival into the Third Millennium* (London: Gaia Books).

<sup>3</sup> See generally James B. Kirkpatrick, ed., 1991, *Tasmanian Native Bush: A Management Handbook* (Hobart: Tasmania Environment Centre), and MacIlroy, ed., 1990, *The Ecofuture of Australian Forests* (Melbourne: ACF).

<sup>4</sup> Man is capitalized herein to refer to the dominant culture, rather than sex *per se*.

## Qualifying remarks

As this work violates academic norms and traditions, I offer some qualifying remarks. To begin with, this work is in the area of ecophilosophy, a field concerned with articulating insights into the hidden assumptions of our culture that have led to the destruction of the nonhuman environment. It is also concerned with developing positive means of bringing about a sustainable society, or one that is in harmony with the 'natural' world. Thus, it is centred on the normative, rather than the descriptive. In this sense, then, the project is not 'academic', or ostensibly non-partisan, because it is necessarily written from an advocacy perspective. Put another way, the very nature of the task requires an academically unorthodox approach and the rejection of any pretence of 'objectivity'. The nature of the environmental crisis suggests that subjectivity may be far more rational than traditional concepts of objectivity.

This project analyzes Planning in the context of the larger decision-making apparatus for the allocation or preservation of natural resources and values. I am concerned with the entire institutional and intellectual framework within which society makes its (largely irreversible) decisions about the natural environment. This broad scope is necessary. If one is serious about Planning reform, one must step well outside the traditional parameters of Planning. This creates difficulties in terms of meeting academic standards, which favour narrow topics. However to use a narrow framework in this case would be to disregard the very nature of the environmental problem, which is complex and multi-dimensional.

This attempt at presenting a comprehensive perspective is in response to the need to expose the political nature of the existing paradigm and to unravel the perceptual and systemic bias that exists at all levels of the institution of Planning. Separating-out patterns from a complex, interconnected system is a messy task, which may explain why a comprehensive analysis of Planning as an institution in society has seldom been attempted. This entails organizational difficulties which I resolve by approaching the subject in a (horizontal) 'spiral', rather than a linear way. This, however, is in keeping with the ecofeminist approach that I am using.<sup>1</sup>

To reframe the issues in a comprehensive way, it is necessary to map out a unified theory of environmental and land use Planning and new model of environmental governance. This could be considered somewhat ambitious or even arrogant, however, it is intended to serve as a scaffolding to be filled in by further work. Unfortunately, the comprehensive scope requires discerning patterns that may seem over-generalized to some. Generalizations are easy to attack from a specialist or academic standpoint, because a counter-argument can focus on a specific

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<sup>1</sup> Patsy Hallen, 1987, "Making Peace with Nature: Why Ecology Needs Feminism", *The Trumpeter* 4 (3) pp. 3-14, at p. 3.

case or detail. My response, however, would be that the exception proves the rule. I have also tried to make the work comprehensive and directed toward non-specialist readers, because the environmental problem requires just this sort of broad perspective. If such a holistic approach is inconsistent with academic norms, then perhaps it is academic norms that have something to answer for.

Similarly, a major impediment to the acceptance of ecofeminist ideas and literature is that ecofeminism is often not seen as authoritative, because it cannot be grounded in past ideas. Aristotle said that all knowledge comes from past knowledge.<sup>1</sup> This is a precept we have followed to our peril. There is no path where we are going, so there is no point trying to legitimize ecofeminism by maintaining that Patriarchs thought of it in the past. They did not.

I also draw heavily upon personal experience, in addition to a wide cross-section of literature both in and outside of the traditional planning and decision-making fields. This approach is based on the conviction that theory and practice should be, in a reciprocal relationship. Each must inform the other if the results are to be relevant to real life problems. Thus, for example, I would suggest that first-hand knowledge of the views and experience of, say, a dozen environmental activists (unpaid workers) should be as valid as an academic book.<sup>2</sup> While this might be a departure from conventional academic form, it is consistent with the ecofeminist paradigm I am using (as it holds theory and activism to be inseparable). To devalue personal experience in this case would therefore, paradoxically, be a breach of theoretical consistency.

When I refer to my experience, it is the experience of a straight, white, middle-aged, human professional of European descent and middle class, American upbringing now living in Tasmania. I am attempting a critical understanding of the anti-environmental bias of this cultural heritage, and cannot adequately represent the perspectives of those whose cultures have been colonized, such as aboriginal peoples. The understanding of my own culture has, however, been informed by first-hand experience working among groups representing differing standpoints.<sup>3</sup>

A theory is merely a simplified picture of reality, and therefore I could be accused of reductionism or the elimination of that which is deemed relatively unimportant. In the present case, I reduce the environmental problem, for practical purposes, to the abuse of power (on

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<sup>1</sup> Edward de Bono, 1990, *I am Right--You are Wrong. From this to the New Renaissance* (NY: Viking Penguin) at p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> The views of workers, especially women workers, in green organizations have generally not been documented, but a good deal of collective wisdom and experience has developed.

<sup>3</sup> In this regard, I subscribe to the view expressed in Sandra Harding, 1991, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking From Women's Lives* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press). In particular, see Chapter 11.

personal and political levels). This conforms with my own observations as a practitioner, and life experience, and coincides with the recently emerging ecofeminist paradigm, which I have therefore appropriated. Some reductionism is inherent in theory construction, but it is only a problem if the 'blind spots' of previous theories are perpetuated in the process, as these reinforce existing biases over time. For example, Marx helped to expose the fact that class stratification is not natural and inevitable, as had been implicitly assumed. By explaining social relations in terms of production, he undermined the social construction that prevented people from questioning the ideological underpinnings of class-based oppression. However, Marx failed to uncover certain other blind spots (such as male-centredness and gendered hierarchy) that make dominance relationships seem natural. Today, certain aspects of reality are consistently ignored in Manstream theory (eg. gender, sex, and Masculine identification) which can be linked to a systemic bias against environmental protection. Ecofeminists are challenging the idea that power-based ways of thinking, relating, and acting are natural and inevitable. This is not reductionism, then, but an attempt to focus on crucial blind spots in our Patriarchal culture for the express purpose of bringing about change.

If we seek to address irrational decision making, we must hypothesize the origins of that behaviour. Having said that the underlying pathology in our culture and institutions should (for practical purposes) be diagnosed as the abuse of power, some form of power drive is implied. This is a tricky proposition, to say the least. The issue is another 'red herring'. This is because, while some feminists have engaged vast amounts of time and energy arguing that aggression is a result of socialization and can therefore be changed, Patriarchs simply ignore them or respond that the problem is biology and cannot be changed. Whether the origins of this drive are to be found in biology and/or culture can only be a matter of speculation. (It could, for example, possibly be traced back to the behaviour of our pre-human ancestors. In many species, for example, males instinctively seek dominance in order to obtain control of the sexual and generative resource. Nonetheless, even if it is biology, it is not destiny.) Dominance relationships and aggression are not a necessary condition of human existence. They only appear to be pre-ordained when we define Man as aggressive and competitive by nature, and this is what Patriarchal society does.

Some have suggested that, for academic credibility, I disguise any feminist theory and terminology, as hints of feminism tends to close people's minds. However, it is important to use gender-based terminology, because we must *affirm* the Feminine in order to heal the deeply rooted imbalance in society associated with Male supremacy. Patriarchal consciousness is too entrenched in the psyche to be simply transcended. Societal-wide psychological problems cannot be resolved by denial or avoidance any more than in the case of individual problems. Thus, I use terms like 'Masculine' to refer to characteristics generally attributed to men and which create a model to which men generally aspire in Western Patriarchal society. Of course, I am not suggesting that the so-called Masculine traits are inherent qualities of men.

Concepts of Masculine and Feminine are *social constructions* and should not be confused with sexual biology. There are several sexes but we are all creatures of a Patriarchal cultures. Thus Patriarchal conceptions of Masculinity and its misogynist ideology create pressures on *both* men and women. For instance, the separation of a public/powerful sphere from a private/mental sphere has meant that women who want active lives often become Masculine-identified and internalize a Masculine mode of behaviour (albeit unconsciously) in order to succeed in the public arena, let alone to be accepted by their professional peers.

Ecofeminism, in my view, provides a logic of consistency for theorizing the abuse of power on personal and political levels, and the relations between self, society and nature. It is thus an appropriate paradigm to both study problems of environmental Planning and decision making and to guide its reform. Of course, ecofeminism is a new and evolving paradigm; therefore, I am using the basic *logic* of ecofeminism and perhaps developing it further as required for the redesign of the Planning system. Needless to say, I am not attempting to develop a definitive ecological paradigm, as social constructions should evolve to meet ever changing circumstances. Also, a paradigm is not a truth: it is a conceptual and instrumental framework that establishes which concepts and relationships are considered important and which methods and techniques are considered valid. Therefore, it can be judged only by its usefulness in generating new insights or strategies.

### The locus

The project makes reference primarily to Planning in Australia and America, although many observations would apply to other capitalist democracies as well. To give such a wide topic some specificity, however, I have used the island state of Tasmania, Australia, as a laboratory for the study. Tasmania also provides a rich source of examples to illustrate the planning issues that are taken up herein. Moreover, Tasmania is in many respects at the forefront of green politics and social change, having had the world's first green party and five green independents in state Parliament (out of 35 total) since 1989.<sup>1</sup> Because it is geographically self-contained, Tasmania is an appropriate test tube for basic institutional reform, should such a thing become politically feasible. There is, after all, occasional talk here of secession from Australia, from the political right.

Some would be skeptical using a particular place, and Tasmania may seem remote or 'different' to the uninitiated. However, I believe it to be a microcosm of process and people problems found everywhere. In fact, it seems to cartoon the decision-making processes found on other land masses. Being place-specific enables us to consider the content and context

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<sup>1</sup> This is in part due to a very democratic preferential voting system called the 'Hare Clark' system.



within which planning occurs. Moreover, drawing examples at random would make it too easy to be selective. With regard to the possibility of over-generalizing from specific cases, John Forester offers this observation:

Too often before, we have paid the steeper price exacted by a narrow empiricism whose results have distracted us not only from widely shared political problems, but also from taking seriously a whole set of more general normative and ethical problems of democratic social organization (imagining and conceptualizing, for example 'justice', respect for difference, 'rights', and 'equality', to name only a few).<sup>1</sup>

The selection of the state as the administrative level for reform begs explanation because a policy of decentralized local decision making is generally regarded as a basic doctrine of green philosophy. But, of course, the island's environmental problems are not contained within its coastline. Also, many of its economic problems originate off shore. The state is greatly dependent upon forest industries, and corporate interests in Japan and Canada seem to have a disproportionate influence on important aspects of government policy. Thus, state boundaries constitute an administrative jurisdiction that is at once both too large and too small.

There are several reasons for choosing to begin at the state level, however. First, the state is the centre of most planning-related controversy in Tasmania. State governments in Australia exercise more power in relation to environmental planning decisions than do their counterparts in America. Tasmanian governments have retained direct control over resource decisions through the absence of an institutional structure for comprehensive planning, and the conviction that major planning decisions should be made by Cabinet (a framework that has encouraged the 'brown paper bag' form of lobbying).<sup>2</sup> Further, it is state land use functions, such as forestry, hydro-electric power generation and mining, rather than local development control, that have been the focus of most social conflict in Tasmania.

Second, reform on a national level may be less feasible than at the state level. Attempts at constitutional reform in Australia during the 1980s were decidedly unsuccessful, despite support from the political party holding power. As the United States experience shows, it is difficult to enact radical nation-wide administrative reform until the burden of conflicting state structures and regulations outweighs the inertia against change. Further, under the Australian Constitution, the States have retained authority over land use issues, and most institutional restructuring that has occurred has been at the State level. The problem is that such experiments have been organizational (reminiscent of 'musical chairs') rather than fundamental, or have simply transposed ideas already proven inadequate elsewhere.

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<sup>1</sup> John Forester, 1990, "Reply to my Critics", *Planning Theory/Newsletter* 21, at p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> There is a State Planning Commission, but it is largely restricted to approving local planning schemes. Presently, a new Commission is being proposed in draft legislation; however, it would be primarily only advisory to Cabinet, not the general public.

Another reason for the focus on State level reform is the widely-recognized need for a comprehensive State Planning system in Tasmania. Although several attempts at legislative reform failed (in 1975, 1980 and 1987), the latter two legislative efforts allowed me to observe at first hand the problems of implementing reform. During the last year of my work on this project (1991), another major reform of the land use and environmental planning system was conducted by the Tasmania Labor Government. This draft legislation would have, at least, brought the Tasmanian system into the 1970s. Unfortunately, while introducing concepts already in place elsewhere, neither the efficacy of these systems in their broader context, nor the assumptions upon which they were based, were seriously questioned. At present, in any case, a Liberal (conservative) Government has come to power and altered the nature of the draft legislation to further entrench Cabinet discretionary power over major developments, and to legitimize fast-track processes (which expedite development by circumventing standard processes and controls). Thus, efforts to stimulate debate on the necessity of Planning reform in Tasmania may well remain timely for decades to come.

Finally, a State level administrative system might seem inconsistent with an ecofeminist paradigm, because the ultimate end 'state' generally sought by radical greens is along the lines of anarchical-socialist, or a confederation of small self-sufficient units conforming to bioregions. However, such an ideal is simply impossible to achieve in a Patriarchal society, due to the corrupting influence of the socially-sanctioned power drive and tendency toward dominance relationships at the personal level. Moreover, personal, social and institutional change are in a reciprocal, dialectic relationship. Therefore, even assuming an 'anarchical' system is ultimately feasible, institutions which can assist us in the transformation towards self-governance are necessary.

### Research base and case study

As noted above, much of the primary research for the project is based on experience in community affairs and environmental activism, as well as in professional planning. This is partly because I am trying to develop an analysis that is relevant to the 'real' world of environmental decision-making, which is far less 'rational' than generally assumed. The capsule history of environmental conflict in Tasmania (Appendix 1) is an attempt to convey that 'reality'. This work, in a sense, retraces my efforts to find an analysis that could adequately theorize the nature of resource allocation in Tasmania. This is rather different from the more common approach in policy analysis which tests one or more abstract models against an actual case history.<sup>1</sup> No history can be objective. For example, if we examine environmental

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<sup>1</sup> J. E. Anderson, 1975, *Public Policy-Making* (London: Nelson) pp. 164-5. A relevant example of this process is D. McEachern, 1990, "Business Politics and the Wesley Vale Pulp Mill", in Ken Dyer and John

decision making through a prism which presupposes value-neutral decision-making structures and decision makers, then we cannot be objective. That is, if we presuppose objectivity we are biased, because that prism itself screens out real problems of human relationships and communication that prevent objectivity.

This case study serves several purposes. First, it should show that the problems relating to environmental decision making cannot be understood in isolation from either the structural or cultural context. The case study stands in stark contrast to the world examined by existing establishment and radical theories. Although recognizing that policy making deviates from rational choice models, these approaches nonetheless persist in interpreting such 'deviations' through (at least implicitly) rationalist models of decision-making and governance. In other words, we have been trained to interpret government processes through mechanistic models which assume rationality. A reluctance to discuss the psychological motivation of decision makers in academia reflects certain gender-based taboos in our society (and taboos usually support existing power relations). The idea that decision making could be affected by non-rational factors such as personal (perhaps even hormonal or instinctive) power drives or sexual identity is off limits in public debate, even though most people have experienced such personal politics in their own workplace. This is partly why non-feminist academic theory has been unable to make the connection between the personal and political, or psychological and structural pressures upon the actors. The case study serves to illustrate why environmental decision making cannot be explained by 'rational' motivations.

I must make clear that I do not attempt any hypothesis on the influences of hormones, gender-related brain differences, or instincts in decision making. I deal only with cultural factors here. My point is that the non-rational power drive is treated as practically *nonexistent* in decision-making theory despite its importance in everyday experience. This is, of course, partly because the influence of personal motivations cannot be measured or tested. Also, the political implications of the idea that behaviour could have biological causes is scary. (However, while speculation about such things can be dangerous, denial is equally dangerous as it creates a fundamental paradigmatic bias.)

A second reason for the case study is to show that environmental decision making cannot accurately be called substantively rational (as defined earlier). The decision makers know what they are doing is non-sustainable, yet persist in the same course of action. For example, Tasmanian politicians could not have failed to hear the argument that the price the companies pay for the forests in terms of royalties do not cover the government subsidies. Nor could they

not have heard the contention that the Tasmanian Government, via the Forestry Commission alone, has created a A\$450 million debt, more than one-third the total State debt, for which the interest payments are currently over A\$80 million per year (in a population of less than half a million).<sup>1</sup> If the public can be said to 'own' the forests, they are not receiving an adequate return. Corporate interests are therefore receiving benefits out of proportion to their reciprocal contribution to the public, especially in view of the lost opportunity for alternative investment. This is not 'rational' decision making, or even a matter of genuine but conflicting values. Rather, I argue that this should be seen as systemic Corruption (Chapter 5).<sup>2</sup>

A third reason for the case study is to suggest the need for radical change. The conventional wisdom was and still is that institutional reform only requires more democratic and/or scientific means of policy development and implementation within the existing institutional and intellectual framework. In fact, the underlying system of governance is almost sacrosanct, as it is associated on an unconscious or emotional level with democracy itself. Thus reform proposals, from the Brundtland Report on the international plane to the recent legislative reform proposal in Tasmania, only address superficial policy and organizational issues within the dominant power-based decision-making structures. (By power-based, I mean that an institutional or cultural system evolved through the interplay of powerful interests rather than through constitutional design or democratic processes.)

Moreover, actual decision-making structures and processes often bear little relation to theory. As the Tasmanian case illustrates, for example, the Planning system has evolved into a 'corporatist' one. (Corporatist decision making is where governments negotiate policies and their implementation in a closed process with peak organizations which have a monopoly of representation over certain categories of interests.) This has contributed to a situation where a few benefit while the general public bears the escalating cost of pollution and resource depletion. This corporatist system is not, however, 'democratic' in the sense that Tasmanians understand the term. It does not conform to the Constitution for decision making (which sets up the system of government), nor was it ever voted upon. The decision-making system itself has been, in a sense, corrupted by the dynamics of power relationships. In short, the position that the existing institutional system needs only minor adjustments simply does not speak to the realities of power relationships that operate both internally and externally upon decision makers.

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<sup>1</sup> See Hugh Saddler, 1991, *Forestry as if Economics mattered: A Study of the Economics of the Tasmanian Forestry Industry* (Hobart, TAS: Goshawk Publications). The problem of course is broader than this. According to the Australian Conservation Foundation, the accumulated timber industry debt in Australia is nearly \$5 billion, which costs taxpayers \$400 million annually to service.

<sup>2</sup> In Chapter 5, I explain why we need a broader conception of corruption (than the usual sense of money passing under the table) as a characteristic of systems and not just people. Hence, corruption is capitalized.

The fourth reason for the case study is to provide a background for my discussion of problems in green strategy. The story shows that while greens have had reason and common sense on their side, to the extent they have been successful, it would appear due to perseverance and luck. Of late, luck appears to be running out. To develop better strategies, an analysis is needed that can account for the lack of reason and common sense in public decision making. My observation is that greens consider public decision making to be irrational only because it has not taken the environment into account, and not because of a fundamentally biased structure. The focus remains on using, rather than transforming, the existing legislative or electoral process. It is, of course, well understood that "there is still no adequate policy-making mechanism to protect the environment at either state or federal level".<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, many non-feminist greens persist in rational argumentation over policy upon the assumption that decision makers are rational, goal-oriented individuals and hence will want to do the right thing. As a result, they give credence to - and hence empower - those who are in their view irrationally destructive of the environment. This is in part because most greens share with their adversaries the androcentric model of Rational Man, discussed in Chapter 11.

Similarly, green strategy is impeded by the acceptance (both in and outside the movement), of the idea that environmental conflict is one of competing 'values' - despite the patent irrationality of giving resources to special interests at below real cost. Because of this general perception of environmental conflict being one of values, greens are accused of taking the 'high moral ground' and being intolerant of other's values. Representative of this view is the following:

When one side of the debate asserts the absolute priority of their values, the stage is set for social conflict, not for social progress. Environmental causes are important because they buy time while we untangle the worst from the best of our achievements. But if they recriminate those of good will, such causes will only waste that precious time.<sup>2</sup>

This interpretation of the green movement is inaccurate, but understandable, considering how greens are put across in the media. The general public is still not 'hearing' what greens are on about, and greens have failed to take this into account in strategy. In relying upon rational arguments for changing values, greens forget that those who are capable of responding to reason have long since been 'converted'. An ecofeminist approach, I argue, begins to overcome these strategical problems, because it does not rely on the conversion of people by spiritual or rational means of persuasion. Also, greens rely heavily on countering the points

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<sup>1</sup> Nicholas M. Economou, 1990, "The Politics of Pulp Mills: An Analysis of the Wesley Vale Pulp Mill dispute", in Ken Dyer and John Young, eds., *above* pp. 53-62, at p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathon Stone, on Ockham's Razor, ABC radio, 19 April, 1992.

made by opposition 'experts', while missing important issues that they consider peripheral, such as matters of process.

## Glossary of special concepts

In this work, I found it necessary to modify the conventional meanings of certain terms for my own purposes, as language in common usage is limited when it comes to expressing green and feminist concepts. (Where I use terms in a special way, I capitalize them to distinguish them from other meanings.) Hopefully, the presentation of these concepts at the beginning will make the work more 'reader friendly', albeit more circuitous.

### Ecofeminism

As an in depth discussion of ecofeminism is presented in Part III, I provide only a capsule definition here. This is my own definition and I do not pretend to speak for all ecofeminists. Put simply, ecofeminism comprehends the environmental crisis as a function of the *abuse of power* on both the personal and political level. This problem definition stands in marked contrast to the conventional treatment of environmental problems as 'the need to balance competing interests' in resource management, or the more radical view of the problem as 'the need to extend the ethics of egalitarianism to include nature'. One advantage of an analysis centring on the abuse of power is that it encompasses militarism, racism, and classism - major sources of environmental destruction that are often marginalized (or even ignored) in ecophilosophy. That is, many branches of ecophilosophy are concerned primarily with Man's relationship with nature and do not adequately theorize the structures of domination that make possible the exploitation of nature. Others ignore the personal dimension of dominance relationships that support those power structures. Non-feminist paradigms in ecophilosophy fail to provide a truly comprehensive alternative to the dominant paradigm because they retain some of the vestiges of androcentrism that underwrite the inherent bias of mainstream thought against environmental protection.

### Planning

Planning (when capitalized) is short hand for those fields called land use, environmental, natural resource or development planning. (Planning is not capitalized when referring to the activity of planning.) It encompasses the two traditional divisions within the profession: advance/strategic and implementation/statutory planning. My focus is on the area of regional planning, as more work has been done with regard to regulating development in urban areas. It is important to see Planning in very broad terms, as most Planning decisions which affect public health, life quality and the natural environment are made outside the formal Planning process. Thus, for example, administrative and financial arrangements which encourage land

clearing and energy consumption need to be considered within the general ambit of Planning decisions. Moreover, many problems ostensibly within the narrow responsibility of the Planning profession are often well beyond its present sphere of influence, including the supply and location of regional land uses (Chapter 5).

This work is concerned with patterns of decision-making theory and practice that are ecologically unsustainable, rather than planning as an ideal. Mainstream theory and analysis, which models decision making in the abstract, has already adequately described any decision making which may correspond to traditional Planning norms. While planners readily acknowledge that Planning decisions are often made without regard to explicit goals or policies, this is seen as a mere departure from the norm. For the purposes of this project, however, planning as an activity includes 'non-planning' and *ad hoc* (even arbitrary) decision making where there is no comprehensive policy or mandated procedural safeguards.

In this work, Planning and resource allocation systems are analyzed as institutions in a public decision-making system. I use the term 'institution' in the broadest sense to encompass all aspects of the decision-making process, the universe of discourse(s) as well. The legislative and administrative frameworks (such as rules, code of ethics, and bureaucratic structures) represent only the formal aspect of institutions. Decision making within these institutions is also affected by the organizational cultures, ideologies, methods and so on. For our purposes therefore, 'institution' includes both the structures and processes for decision making, and the underlying concepts for interpreting, organizing and communicating information. Rather than making a sharp separation between institutional and social structures, they are regarded as mutually reinforcing.

In my view, Planning has not been adequately analyzed in relation to its wider cultural and institutional context, and this is particularly the case with regard to the environmental crisis. In my attempt to fill this gap, I argue that Planning favours powerful interests in resource exploitation at the expense of the general public (at least over the long term), because it has evolved within a power-based social order and ethic. (The term 'power-based' includes both dominance and hierarchy. When applied to institutions, it means shaped by power relations and/or favouring the powerful.) The abuse of power follows almost inevitably from the logic of Patriarchy. As I regard Patriarchal consciousness and power structures as central to the environmental problem, I must explain these terms before we begin our discussions on Planning.

## **Power**

Power is a concept which everyone understands until they are asked to define it. Many books have been written on the subject - albeit surprisingly few considering its ubiquitous

nature - and many of these do not define power.<sup>1</sup> In the most general use of the term, I refer simply to 'the ability to get one's way'. Power, in this sense at least, is obtained by the control of social and/or natural resources which makes it a fundamental factor in the environmental crisis. The objective of ecofeminism is to move 'beyond power'.

The concept of power has been broken down into different categories, such as its psychological, systemic, and structural dimensions.<sup>2</sup> I adhere to the ecofeminist distinction between two types of personal power: one is a positive quality, 'power to', while the other is negative, 'power over'.<sup>3</sup> This is a conceptual distinction which refers to an attitude or disposition, of course, as it would be almost impossible to determine empirically.

Broadly speaking, I would define 'personal power' in its negative sense (or power over) as being in a position to take undue advantage of others in a non reciprocal way. That is, the concept encompasses both domination and hierarchy. Structural power is, loosely speaking, being in a position where one does not have to listen to those being disadvantaged by the system which provides that position. Systemic power is where structures of oppression and dominance (not just hierarchy) are built in to the institutions and culture itself. I refer to power as 'ability or being in a position' because abuse, oppression and structural inequalities may be coercive even where that power is not exercised. For example, in many cases a husband may not be violent or psychologically abusive, but the wife will still understand that if she asserts her rights as an equal, society will judge her harshly.

Where does the power drive originate? One source of the power drive could be instinct, as power over the female of the species has been a means of insuring both sex and reproduction among many animals. However, this is necessarily speculative and beyond the subject area of this thesis. Whatever the origins, little in life's experience is more basic: the power drive is deeply rooted in the psyche and culture. It seems to be stronger where it is denied, or where other means of satisfaction and meaning are missing in one's life. Thus, since men in Western culture tend to be out of touch with their emotions, it is not surprising that a relatively high proportion of men obsessively seek power.

The term 'power-based' includes both dominance and hierarchy. By 'power-based institution', I mean one shaped by power relations and/or favouring the powerful. In a

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<sup>1</sup> For example, John Forester, 1989, *Planning in the Face of Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

<sup>2</sup> See Kenneth E. Boulding, 1989, *Three Faces of Power* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications); Steven Lukes, 1974, *Power: A Radical View* (London: MacMillan); David C. McClelland, 1975, *Power: The Inner Experience* (N.Y.: John Wiley and Son). Linda D. Molm, 1986, "Gender, Power and Legitimation: A Test of Three Theories", *American Journal of Sociology* 91 (6) pp. 1356-86; Hubert M. Blabock, Jr., 1989, *Power and Conflict: Toward a General Theory* (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications).

<sup>3</sup> See Marilyn French, 1986, *Beyond Power: Women, Men and Morals* (London: Jonathon Cape).



capitalist context, representative democracy and the market have thus become power-based systems, just as much as bureaucracies. I argue that this is because these institutions have evolved through the interplay of powerful interests rather than being built upon an 'ethics-based' constitution.

## **Patriarchy**

In academia, the term Patriarchy is often used narrowly to refer to social arrangements that sustain male domination. In the feminist vernacular, however, Patriarchy refers not only to male-dominated family and state institutions, but their underlying perceptual framework and value as well.<sup>1</sup> Among activist feminists, the term is even broader: Patriarchy has come to be understood in its broader meaning as an umbrella term which stands for the logic of oppression contained within the dominant cosmology, ideology and structures of modernity. This broader conception of Patriarchy is the one used here.

Patriarchal consciousness has been explained by ecofeminists in terms of two related concepts: androcentrism (male-centredness) and 'hierarchical dualism'.<sup>2</sup> (Patriarchy should be distinguished from mere 'hierarchy', which refers to relationships of command and obedience enforced by Patriarchal social structures and institutions.<sup>3</sup>) My definition of Patriarchy encompasses the concepts of 'hierarchy', 'dualism' and 'androcentrism'. These, I suggest, are the key elements of Patriarchal consciousness and power structures. Thus Patriarchy is a broader concept than that of 'hierarchy' (anarchical theory) or 'domination' (critical theory). Let us take the hierarchical component of the later concept first.

## **Hierarchy**

In Patriarchal society, a Man's personal worth tends to be measured by 'power over'. Therefore, many seek to obtain their emotional needs (security, acceptance, love) through the acquisition and exercise of power at the personal and/or political level. 'Power over', however, is obtained through the control, exploitation or consumption of (social and natural) resources. Therefore power-seeking is necessarily competitive and zero sum. Moreover, in a

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<sup>1</sup> Scholars use Patriarchy in a variety of senses. For a discussion of the different meanings of 'Patriarchy' see Carol Pateman, 1988, "Patriarchal Confusions", *International Journal of Moral and Social Studies* 3, pp. 127-143. Gerda Lerner defines Patriarchy as "the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general (Gerda Lerner, 1986, *The Creation of Patriarchy* [Oxford: Oxford University Press] at p. 239). The use of the term Patriarchy creates hostile reactions and is a barometer of male-chauvinism.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of hierarchical dualism, see Karen J. Warren, 1990, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism", *Environmental Ethics* 12(2) pp. 125-146.

<sup>3</sup> The links between hierarchy and Patriarchy are examined in many works, including Elizabeth Dodson Gray, 1982, *Green Paradise Lost* (MA: Roundtable Press) and Dorothy Dinnerstein, 1976, *The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and the Human Malaise* (NY: Harper and Row).

Patriarchal social context that legitimizes hierarchies at the structural level and dominance relationships at the personal level, power will inevitably be abused by some. The abuse of power is common to all forms of environmentally-damaging 'isms', such as militarism, capitalism, racism, classism, consumerism and sexism. Patriarchy is a social structure that leads to exploitation and abuse. The abuse of power is therefore incompatible with sustainability.

### Dualism

The dualistic component of hierarchical dualism refers to the polarization of the Masculine and Feminine in Patriarchal consciousness and cultures. (Of course, the terms Masculine and Feminine are used as metaphorical icons for systems of value to which people of any sex can subscribe.) Patriarchal cultures are those which dichotomize what they identify as the Masculine and Feminine, and devalue the latter. Also, attributes associated with the Feminine (eg. nurturing, caring, intuitive, accommodating) are seen as belonging to the private (family) sphere while those that are associated with the Masculine (eg. competitive, aggressive, rational, autonomous) are seen as characterizing actors in the public sphere.

To establish their Masculine identity, in such a culture, men are under pressure to be as different from women as they can be, and therefore to deny the validity of feeling, intuition, and altruism. As women are defined in negative terms as emotional, irrational, dependent, and weak, to be 'a man' is therefore to be in control, rational, and independent. Because Masculinity is associated with 'power over', those who have less power, or are associated with nature (as are women and indigenous peoples in Patriarchal cosmology), are seen as inferiors. In Western metaphysics generally, the Masculine has been associated with reason, mind, god, power, and sky, and elevated above the Feminine, emotion, body, weakness and earth.<sup>1</sup> And, because 'weakness' (being female) is despised, relationships of dependence and dominance are seen as justifiable. Gendered dualism and power-based social relationships are therefore mutually reinforcing.

### Androcentrism

Due perhaps to the historic male monopoly over political, cultural and intellectual institutions, virtually all non-feminist theories of society have been premised upon an androcentric model of Man. 'Androcentrism' refers to the fact that humanity is implicitly visualized as male. As already mentioned, Maleness is defined in Western society by such adjectives as competitive, self-interested, autonomous, rational, and freedom seeking (from social and natural constraints). These so-called Masculine traits were reified as ideals by the philosophy of the Enlightenment which underlies much of modern academic theory, whether

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<sup>1</sup> See generally, Marilyn French, 1985, *above*.

conservative, liberal, or progressive. Because the dominant tradition in Western thought takes these (Masculine) attributes as synonymous with 'human nature', their gendered and one-dimensional character is concealed.

Due to the universalization of men's experience, concerns, interests, and values, those of women have been disregarded. They have not, therefore, been factored into either social theory or public policy. Just as women have been marginalized from the public sphere, qualities associated with the Feminine have been deemed unsubstantiated, if not unreal. Androcentrism permitted the objectification of nature and of non-white, non-male humans that facilitated the industrial revolution. It also laid the groundwork for the technological and economic determinism that is complicit in the modern crisis. For simplicity, I refer to this androcentric and hierarchical/dualistic way of thinking, relating and acting as the Power Paradigm. Let us first clarify what we mean by paradigm.

### **Paradigm**

Technically speaking, a paradigm is a conceptual and instrumental framework which guides research and analysis.<sup>1</sup> It determines the concepts and relationships that are seen as important and the methods and techniques considered to be valid. A paradigm is not concerned with facts, but how they are to be interpreted. It cannot, therefore, be tested or proven. Instead, its worth is measured by its usefulness as an aid to discovering new insights and new solutions to old problems, or the identification of new ones. In its popular usage, a paradigm refers more broadly to the prism through which individuals perceive reality. In this sense, it is almost synonymous with 'world view'. In this work, the term paradigm is used in this broader sense, but ecofeminism serves as a paradigm in the strict, technical sense as well. In both cases, a paradigm is an artefact of the mind, yet is often seen as coterminous with reality itself, or not consciously recognized as being a construct. The most relevant example of this is the fact that most people still see the hierarchical dualistic portrayal of reality as 'natural'.

### **Power Paradigm**

In Western Patriarchal culture, what I choose to call the Power Paradigm has been internalized in our minds, embodied in our institutions, and played out in social relations in our daily lives and upon the world stage. While often not conscious, this constellation of ideas and values is more ubiquitous than most realize. For example, the devaluing of the feminine is reflected in all areas of our male-dominant institutions, including those that impact most directly on the environment, such as science and economics. These fields reveal an obsession with abstract, empirical and quantifiable methods. Feelings and subjectivity (being Feminine) are

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<sup>1</sup> See Gary Cutting, ed., 1980, *Paradigms and Revolutions: Appraisals and Applications of Thomas Kuhn's Philosophy of Science* (IN: U. of Notre Dame Press).

considered less valid. One problem is that these technocratic norms and practices create the dangerous illusions of rationality, objectivity, and the idea that we can or should control life itself. This explains the familiar tendency to monitor and record environmental crises, rather than to find social solutions. Critical theorists and feminists have shown that these methodologies are not value-neutral.<sup>1</sup> The Power Paradigm creates a bias against the preservation of such meaningful aspects of life as community and nature, or what some call the Feminine Principle.

### **Feminine Principle**

The term 'Feminine principle' is short hand for that constellation of qualities and values associated with the Feminine in Patriarchal cultures (due perhaps to women's traditional care-taking role and their exclusion from the centres of power). For some ecofeminists, this concept has a spiritual meaning but not as used here.<sup>2</sup> Again, I take no position on whether traits generally attributed to women have cultural, genetic or hormonal origins (eg. being more concerned with relationships than ego and power, being less violent and so on).<sup>3</sup> In Chapter 10, I present an ecofeminist analysis of the origins and evolution of Patriarchy. The nature/nurture debate has no bearing on my argument, however, as social change is the objective, and men are capable of taking on these Feminine attributes and vice versa, regardless of where they start from.<sup>4</sup> I use the term simply because most people hold a common definition of which attributes are regarded as Feminine in Western society. In Patriarchy, the systemic devaluation of the Feminine principle has been a fundamental basis of domination, and the recognition of this fact would in itself assist the process of social change.

### **Manstream theory**

The importance of looking at the repercussions of the dichotomy between so-called Masculine and Feminine values in Patriarchal cultures is this: power cannot be adequately theorized from a gender-blind perspective. In fact, gender-blindness is power-blindness. The debate over how to bring about social change, however, has occurred largely within a Patriarchal universe of discourse that ignores the connection between personal and political

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<sup>1</sup> See Evelyn Reed, 1978, *Sexism and Science* (NY: Pathfinder); Sandra Harding, 1991, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women's Lives* (NY: Cornell University Press); Londa Schiebinger, 1989, *The Mind has no Sex? Women in the Origins of Modern Science* (MA: Harvard University Press).

<sup>2</sup> For the latter view, see Vandana Shiva, 1989, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development*. (London: Zed Books) pp. 38-42.

<sup>3</sup> See generally Carol Gilligan, 1982, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (MA: Harvard University Press). See also *Time Magazine* (Australia) 7 (3), 20 January 1992, pp. 30-37.

<sup>4</sup> There are now many men's self-help groups directed towards overcoming Patriarchal conditioning, and other groups seeking a redefinition of Masculinity. See Erica Simmons, 1992, "New Age Patriarchs", *New Internationalist* 227 (January) pp. 29-30.

power relations. Many 'radical' green thinkers and activists, or those who believe that fundamental social change is prerequisite to saving the planet, have failed to come to terms with some of the fundamental roots of human oppression and environmental exploitation. Their theories are still - despite prodding from feminists - largely gender-blind, trapped in an androcentric prism and impeded by the myth of Masculine rationality. Hence I define such green theories as 'Manstream'.

Ecofeminism exposes and challenges the underlying premises that Manstream theories share, to varying extents, with mainstream theory. It is therefore crucial to social change. I go further, however, and argue that, to the extent green theorists ignore feminist theory, and green campaigners ignore feminist practice, they are actually supporting the status quo and impeding social transformation. To this end, I discuss some ways in which Patriarchal consciousness still impedes the different schools of green theory and strategy in terms of the content and process of social transformation. However, I concentrate on the orientation in green thought that centres on human chauvinism. As a reference point, I use the literature of deep ecology, which sees anthropocentrism (or human-centredness) as the crucial barrier to social transformation.

## Ethics

One of the main sources of bias created by the (post-Enlightenment) Patriarchal conception of Man is in the conception of ethics. The term ethics itself therefore requires some discussion. For our purposes, environmental ethics ('Ethics'), is distinguished from rights-based conceptions of ethics. Traditional rights-based ethics derive from an atomistic, androcentric conception of Man and are often referred to in terms of distributional justice, or egalitarianism (among people and other living beings). This conception of ethics is not adequate for addressing problems concerning the relations between individual, collective, and non-human needs and values. The problem is that rights-based (that is, power-based) concepts of ethics, such as inter-generational or inter-species equity, by their inherent logic, lead to trade offs or 'interest balancing'. Due to the realities of power, this ethic invariably results in incremental trade-offs of the environment in the interests of present needs and wants, which at best simply slow down the destruction of wilderness.

If we continually 'balance' the rights of humans against those of other species, the rights of indigenous peoples against those of the dominant culture,<sup>1</sup> the needs of future generations against those of the living, or the environment against present interests in development, we will

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<sup>1</sup> Land rights is a misnomer, as the idea that humans are separate from nature is a construct of Western culture. Many aboriginal cultures see humans as belonging to the land, rather than the land belonging to humans. For a brief introduction to Aboriginal views toward the land, see Ngapare K. Hopa, 1990, 'Papatuanuku' 'Spaceship Earth', in Ken Dyer and John Young, eds., *above* pp. 574-580.

eventually lose the politically weaker half of each pair. Thus, while a rights-based ethic is arguably an appropriate basis for mediating social relationships and conflicts that have limited environmental impacts, the implications of this traditional approach are problematic when applied to environmental issues. To create a sustainable society, we need an Ethic grounded in our moral responsibility.

In contrast, Ethics in this work refers to fundamental *ecologically-based* principles (as opposed to rules) guiding interactions with other people, society as a whole, and the rest of nature. But such an Ethic can only exist in a society where a sense of interconnectedness, empathy, and responsibility is affirmed.

### **Androcentric premise**

To summarize, I call these implicit assumptions about the nature of Man, society and nature the 'Androcentric Premise'. The key elements of this Premise are:

- a) the polarization of Masculine and Feminine archetypes and the elevation of Masculine traits and values (hierarchical dualism);
- b) the deep association of women, nature, earth, and matter, which are seen as existing to serve Man's 'higher' purposes (instrumentalism);
- c) the Masculine ideal of autonomy and independence (from nature and community), which has underwritten the alienation and anthropocentrism of Western society;
- d) the universalization of that ideal (independence) as a goal to which humanity as a whole is naturally and subjectively meant to strive (though this often excludes women). This underwrites the ideal of progress.
- e) the association of Masculinity and 'power over' which, combined with the above, give licence to create dependency and dominance relationships as being pre-ordained by god or nature.

While non-feminist thinkers may reject certain of the above elements, these remain part of the backcloth that influences our way of thinking, relating and acting in Patriarchal society. In Part II, we see that Planning theory reflects these premises and assumptions as well.

## **PART II: DECONSTRUCTION OF THE PLANNING SYSTEM**

## INTRODUCTION TO PART II

The first half of this work, Part II, uses an ecofeminist paradigm to deconstruct the resource allocation and Planning system. It examines the institutional functions of the existing Planning system, in relation to the environmental crisis, within its broader socio-political context. Basically, it questions the capacity of Planning to achieve its broader ethical/ecological imperatives. The purpose of this deconstruction is to develop the parameters of an alternative Planning system that could potentially help to overcome the problems inherent in the present system. Among other things, we look at:

(a) why crucial, irreversible decisions affecting sustainability are often 'unplanned' and/or beyond the influence of public planners and, more generally, why we, as a society, have developed no plans for living within our means;

(b) how the dominant meta-paradigm in planning thought shapes our definitions of the environmental problem, resource allocation and Planning, and how these definitions distort and misdirect our approach to environmental planning and problem solving generally;

(c) how the resource allocation system (of which planning is one decision-making arena), as well as the theories, structures and processes within Planning itself, contribute to the increasing trend toward nonsustainability, with its attendant social conflict.

(d) how the market and Planning systems have been falsely dichotomized in the collective imagination when, in reality, they have been merging in form and substance - and what this portends for the natural environment.

Using an ecofeminist paradigm, I then canvas some systemic biases which ultimately generate environmental problems and conflict, reconceptualize and/or uncover Planning problems presently overlooked by mainstream Planning paradigms, and develop an outline for the reconstruction of the resource allocation and Planning system. For convenience, I break down the analysis into four layers:

(a) the conventional (liberal) problem definition (Chapter 2), which I argue conceals the transfer of public resources to special interests at below cost, and obscures the role of the Planning and resource allocation system in that conversion process. (A problem description suggested by an ecofeminist paradigm is set out in Chapter 3).

(b) the 'superstructure' level (Chapter 4), or problems created by the discrepancy between the perceived and actual relationship between the four major social decision-making arenas



concerned with resource allocation: representative politics, the market, government Planning and the law.

(c) the 'structure' level (Chapter 5), or problems created by the Planning system itself as an institution in society. In particular, we look at Planning as a system which transfers environmental resources and amenities between public and private interests, in order to fulfil a conflict management function.

(d) the 'infrastructure' level (Chapter 6) or the theories, ideologies, paradigms, methods and techniques within the institution of Planning itself, or problems created by the inherent bias of the 'framework of thinking' into which planners are inculcated.

On each of these four levels, we see that the decision-making system for resource allocation and Planning reflects Patriarchy and the Power Paradigm which characterizes the larger society within which it functions. I then show that, as a consequence of this Patriarchal bias, the system is inherently conflict generating because, among other things, it reinforces the power relationships that led to the economic and ethical problems of modernity in the first place. That is, the system is biased in favour of powerful development interests, despite the fact that Planning is commonly regarded as an 'impediment' to development.

I then use an ecofeminist paradigm to develop alternative models for resource allocation and Planning at each of the above levels. The basic objective of institutional redesign is to prevent (to the extent possible) the abuse of power, and to encourage public consideration of the substantive ethical issues that lie at the heart of environmental issues. While such fundamental institutional change sounds radical, the changes to decision-making structures, methods, and processes would be simple to implement. In my opinion, they would be more in keeping with the original spirit and intent of the (United States, Australian and Canadian) Constitution. In other words, these changes would bring the public decision-making process closer to the original liberal/conservative ideal, while expanding it to encompass the third dimension (the environment).

In Chapter 8, we look at the problems which beset attempts at Planning reform, and how these impediments to reform reflect key features of the Patriarchal culture. Institutional reform has been blocked by the same perceptual barriers that have impeded positive social change in Patriarchal society generally: reasons which I categorize under (a) dominance relationships, (b) dualistic thinking, and (c) the Masculine model of (rational) Man.

I then go further to argue that adequate institutional change cannot occur within a Patriarchal cosmology and social order. With regard to social change generally, traditional approaches (left and liberal/conservative) have tended to rely on either individual or structural change to the exclusion of the other. The same generalization can be made for Mainstream green orientations. To achieve a sustainable society, both institutional and social transformation must be

undertaken concurrently, as they are in a complex 'chicken and egg' relationship. A new framework of analysis is needed to comprehend both the psychological and structural factors that impede social change. In my view, the ecofeminist paradigm best achieves this synthesis. Part III therefore takes up ecofeminism in detail as a paradigm for revealing the ideological distortions of Patriarchal consciousness, and for guiding social change generally.

## CHAPTER 2: PROBLEM DEFINITION

### The importance of problem definitions

I have suggested that the crux of the environmental crisis today is, for practical purposes, the abuse of power on personal and political levels and, in particular, the transfer of public resources to special interests at below cost and the externalization of the private costs of development.<sup>1</sup> There has been a tendency to assume that Planning's redistributive function operates in the opposite direction. For example, in 1972, the federal Labor government in Australia won office and set up the Department of Urban and Regional development (DURD) with the explicit intention of redistributing wealth in favour of the disadvantaged. While this attempt at redistribution was short lived, equity was its intention. However, equity was seen as a function of location, access to jobs and so on, rather than a function of, say, ownership of the means of production. Its policies therefore centred on promoting development in disadvantaged regions. Thus, the objective was nominally redistributive, but the means could not achieve the ends. This suggests the importance of how a problem is defined.

We begin by looking at how problem definitions are controlled and maintained by the powerful. Given a society built upon power relationships, problem definitions and the theories that support them will persist over time only if they serve the interests of the powerful: "the distribution of power determines *whose* ideology, interests, and information will be dominant".<sup>2</sup> This means that, in any power structure, institutions and methods will eventually be corrupted to serve those in a position to select and propagate ideologies that suit their interests. As evidence of this, let us consider the 'selectivity' through which certain theoretical concepts achieve prominence.

For example, Western societies adopted Bentham's utilitarian calculus in economic and political theory, but not his broader ethical intent.<sup>3</sup> Bentham's ethic was based on maximising "happiness", but he envisaged that we would learn to take pleasure in the happiness of others, even of animals. The positivist approach had been tailored to the problem in its contemporary

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<sup>1</sup> Planning has, of course, been described as a wealth transfer system by others. See Hugh Stretton, 1970, *Ideas for Australian Cities* (Adelaide: Orphan Books) at p. 310. These analyses have generally been within an anthropocentric framework, however, and thus are 2-dimensional.

<sup>2</sup> Carol H. Weiss, 1983, "Ideology, Interests, and Information: The Basis of Policy Positions", in Daniel Callahan and Bruce Jennings, eds., *Ethics, the Social Sciences and Policy Analysis* (NY: Plenum Press) pp. 213-270, at p. 239.

<sup>3</sup> See generally Helen Mary Warnock, 1979, *Utilitarianism* (London: Fount Paperbacks).

social context - the Corruption of the natural justice system. Put differently, his reforms were inspired to correct the injustices and absurdities created by rigidification of certain religious-based doctrines that had been co-opted into the service of elites.

Modern economists replaced this idea of happiness with that of maximizing consumers' preferences, or 'utility', as measured by their 'willingness' to pay.<sup>1</sup> 'Willingness' has, however, been measured by what people in reality must pay, not by how they 'feel' about paying. Further, this has in reality been a measure of the 'ability to pay'. The poor are given fewer 'votes' or consumer preferences. This is substantively different from the happiness people actually obtain as a consequence of paying, which is ignored perhaps because happiness, being subjective, cannot be measured. For example, we may be willing to pay for status symbols because of the pressure to conform, but they do not necessarily bring us happiness because (in a Patriarchal, power-based culture) we 'need' ever more status. Nonetheless, willingness (read 'ability') to pay has been somehow substituted for the happiness derived from the material goods we have obtained by trading away our time. There may be cheaper ways of buying social acceptance and respect, but these are not recognized by the market. Also, there is little real consumer choice for those who would like to live ecologically by, for example, using efficient public transport.

Another example of the 'natural selection' process by which theories that benefit the powerful attain prominence is revealed in the way Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* was forgotten. In this work, Smith wrote that a system of justice was necessary to hold self-interest in check. This would have put his more famous theory, as propounded in *The Wealth of Nations*, into a more balanced perspective.

Examples of more direct relevance are found in the present trend toward adopting 'interest balancing' concepts. In the 1800s, government regulation of land in the United States was rather rigid. A balancing test was introduced by the courts in 1922 which was designed to restrict government interference in private property rights.<sup>2</sup> The test involved weighing the value of the regulation to the public against the loss in property value to the owner. Thus, this new decision rule, interest balancing, operated to increase the rights of private developers to impose externalities (nuisances) upon others.

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<sup>1</sup> See generally Mark Sagoff, 1988, *Economy of the Earth: Philosophy, Law and the Environment* (NY: Cambridge University Press).

<sup>2</sup> In the United States, a balancing test was instituted in 1922 for determining whether a land use regulation amounts to an unconstitutional 'taking' and was hence subject to just compensation under the US Constitution (Pennsylvania Coal C. v. Mahon, 260 U.S. 393, 415 [1922]). The power of government to regulate private land use was thus constrained, by linking it to the concept of eminent domain (Rideout v. Knox, 148 Mass, 368, 19 N.E. 390 [1889]).

The point is that while the legal system had historically protected property rights against nuisances, it came to be used to protect developers from preservation interests. Originally, one could not destroy the use of another's land through, say, pollution, without paying the value of that land as determined by the owner. But the potential was there to stop economic growth, as a growing number of people began to value nature, the home, the family farm and lifestyle more than money. The dominant *rights-based* decision rule was therefore abandoned for an *interest-balancing* concept, where a third party decides what the land is worth to the owner. (As the interests that are considered tend to be 'rights', it perhaps should be called a 'rights-balancing' concept.)

Thus, decision-making concepts in the law (deriving from the U.S.) are increasingly designed to "balance the interests" in development and preservation. In practice, this means that developments can go ahead even if they destroy adjacent property rights, so long as the interests in development are deemed to outweigh the interests of those opposing it. Property law concepts sufficed when they protected the powerful, but today the powerful are no longer the propertied gentry, so the concepts upon which justice is determined have changed.

Similarly, environmental impact assessment (EIA), and its economic parallel, cost-benefit analysis<sup>1</sup> have become major tools of decision making in Planning. This often means that, as a practical matter at least, the present benefits of development simply need to outweigh the present costs, regardless of their effect on less tangible and quantitative factors such as that of holding future options open. Although the EIA process was an advance because it forced decision makers to consider the costs of development, the costs are, in fact, never fully calculated (Chapter 6).

These are just a few illustrations of how the way a problem is framed can assure that the interests of the powerful are protected. We now look at descriptive theory in Planning; in particular, how the environmental problem is defined in Planning theory. We will see that this problem definition reflects an androcentric interpretation of Man and society which, in turn, generates or at least impedes the resolution of environmental conflict. In the following chapter, I define the environmental problem from an ecofeminist perspective, and proceed to analyze the bias of the resource allocation system accordingly.

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<sup>1</sup> See Steven Kelman, 1981, *What Price Incentives? Economists and the Environment* (Boston: Auburn House).

## The political paradigm in Planning<sup>1</sup>

In the remainder of this chapter I explain why a system capable of giving expression to the new ecological Ethic cannot be created within the reformist paradigm in planning thought. This is because the environmental problem has been defined in order to fit the solution: a liberal conception of social justice or 'egalitarianism' has simply been transposed onto the environment problem. This paradigm, although it has inspired attempts at institutional reform, is based on an androcentric interpretation of nature, society and humanity and, as such, is inadequate to address problems of power relationships in resource allocation. The paradigm creates a bias against environmental protection because it is designed to deal with only two dimensions: Man and society. The paradigm misfit has thus arisen, I believe, because environmental lawyers and planners have uncritically accepted concepts pertinent to *social reform* as being adequate for dealing with the third dimension: the environment. This largely applies to progressive planners as well.

As a result of the reformist paradigm, Planning reforms have been procedural in character. They have been designed to make the 'rules of the game' more equitable, by opening decision making to a broader representation of values and interests, and by improving communication between the stakeholders. The solution to the environmental problem has often been, therefore, to simply include representatives of environmental interests within more open, balanced and democratic processes. Given the paradigm underlying liberalism, the procedural orientation is almost inevitable.

I call this the 'Pluralist paradigm' because it interprets society in terms of competing pluralist (inter-personal or group) interests. Pluralist is capitalized to distinguish the term from the traditional pluralist theory of Planning (discussed later) that mirrors liberal ideology. Although the use of pluralism and Pluralism is confusing, it conveys the idea that progressive Planning has not broken away from its liberal underpinnings. Instead, the term Pluralism here refers to a deep and largely unconscious view about how society is meant to function, in which liberal ideology is embedded. Liberalism "idealizes a society in which autonomous individuals are provided maximal freedom to pursue their own interests in competition".<sup>2</sup> It is based on a Masculine interpretation of human nature, which takes competitive, individualistic social interaction to be natural and appropriate. This framework is also implicit in many left-wing approaches, as they see group struggle as the primary means to social change. That is, while

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<sup>1</sup> A significant portion of this material in this chapter was first published in J. Birkeland-Corro, 1988, "Redefining the Environmental Problem", *Environmental and Planning Law Journal* 5, pp. 109-133.

<sup>2</sup> Karen J. Warren, 1989, "Feminism and Ecology: Making the Connections", *Environmental Ethics* 9(1) pp. 3-20 at p. 8.

planning theorists often juxtapose pluralist and progressive planning, I would argue that they share the same Pluralist assumptions.

The Rationalist paradigm and its Pluralist critique embody fundamental premises of the Patriarchal culture that have contributed to environmental problems. While progressive theories criticize the dominant Rationalist paradigm of Planning in favour of a more populist and participatory approach, they remain confined within the assumptions of the broader paradigmatic construct, thereby protecting the status quo they propose to reform. False choices deflect attention from problems common to both alternatives and impede deeper insights. The typology I use is illustrated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Typology of Planning orientations**

	Actor-oriented	Structure-oriented
Rationalists	Methodological orientation	
	Techniques for decision making	Systems thinking
Pluralists	Implementation orientation	
	Pluralist politics	Progressive politics

Given a construction of society as a collective of individual and group interests, the problem facing public policy makers is the need to satisfy many conflicting demands. As a logical outcome of this framework, the implicit goal of any public decision-making system is to achieve a 'balance' between competing interests. This holds for institutions concerned with resource allocation and planning as well. Thus, resource exploitation and conservation are generally portrayed as conflicting but equal *values* to be reconciled through some kind of compromise. Because this interpretation of environmental conflict is founded upon basic precepts about the nature of Man and society, it is found in both right and left political ideologies.

When social inequities or imbalances result from resource allocation decisions, they are assumed to be a result of a departure from due process. Reforms, therefore, are directed at bringing the process closer to that Pluralist ideal, by altering the rules so that competition over environmental resources and amenity will be more fair, and outcomes therefore more "balanced". This Pluralist framework is, arguably, quite useful for dealing with issues of inter-

personal (and perhaps even intergenerational) equity. In fact, Pluralist concepts have guided many improvements to the decision-making process in the last twenty-five years. However, Pluralist reforms such as 'due process', advocacy, third party appeals, environmental mediation, conflict resolution methods and the like, while important in creating a just forum for contesting individual cases and controversies, have little application to determining the broader Ethical issues at stake in environmental issues. The Pluralist paradigm cannot wrap itself around the ecological dimension: it does not speak to the basic realities of diminishing natural and social resources and increasing population on a finite planet.

The trouble is that Pluralism centres the environmental debate around *distributional* issues: the *rate of consumption* and *relative distribution* of benefits and burdens. Long-term problems are inevitable in a system that is structured for making (consumer) choices among present options. The solution to environmental conflict in this social order requires the consumption of land and resources. This means that there will be a growing loss of real social choices as resources are consumed. As a consequence of this diminishing choice and opportunity, social conflict will inevitably increase. Moreover, Pluralist reforms to the allocation and Planning system will be inadequate to confine competition over these dwindling resources to formal channels. People who sense the system is hopelessly biased toward consumption have begun to resort to extramural forms of activism.

Another problem is that, while Pluralist theory and reform has contributed to improved decision-making and dispute-management processes, it has obscured the power relationships underlying environmental problems. Because it interprets environmental conflict as competition among groups or individuals, it obscures the underlying conflict between special interests and the general public which planners should address. Because the Pluralist paradigm limits the repertoire of legislative concepts to procedural - rather than systemic - issues, the competitive and hierarchical social structure is legitimized and even reinforced.

Procedural reforms might be adequate for distributional issues if power relationships were indeed pluralist. This, however, is certainly not the case. Development interests are becoming more centralized and powerful, while the pace of resource exploitation, population growth and disparities in wealth is accelerating, yet the Planning system is constructed as if private interests in environmental protection can represent the environment. I suggest that environmental conflict should instead be conceived of as being increasingly a function of a system which allows the diversion of undervalued public resources to special interests and externalizes the private costs of development.

Pluralism in Planning, although intended to provide for social justice and equality of opportunity works against human development, freedom and equality in the long term. While an ecofeminist paradigm is not a necessary prerequisite to this analysis, ecofeminism explains the centrality and tenacity of the Pluralist interpretation of society (based as it is on the



Masculine model of Man). Thus, it shows that alternatives to the rights-based, distributive, decision-making systems are possible. To resolve social conflict, a Planning system is needed that can address the Ethical issues inherent in resource allocation decisions.

Were we to plan, in the sense of problem solving or preparing for a safe, secure future - rather than merely to contain land use disputes by mediating conflicting demands - we would expand the range, supply and substantive choice of natural and social resources to meet both present and future needs. This necessarily entails the restoration and/or preservation of any relatively undisturbed ecosystems. Regrettably, we have not begun to plan for how to live within our means. We will apparently not begin to plan until virtually all natural habitats have been destroyed.<sup>1</sup> This is not just the fault of consumers and voters, or bureaucrats and politicians who do not value the natural environment. It is also the fault of environmental planners as a profession who, though 'concerned' about sustainability, remain wedded to the dominant paradigm which provides them economic advantages without the burden of responsibility.

## Pluralism

I have suggested that conservative and progressive Planning are both embedded in the dominant paradigm and hence conceive of Planning issues as a matter of fair distribution rather than Ethics. To substantiate this, it is necessary to take a quick excursion into the bowels of Planning theory. In anticipation of the argument that there are several conflicting paradigms in Planning, I must first establish that there is one dominant Planning paradigm. There are, of course, numerous models of decision making and implementation; it could even be said that each theorist has their own. I suggest, however, that these models can be subsumed under two main orientations which share the same foundation, 'the androcentric premise'.

The social science disciplines tend to divide into two paradigms. One has tended to dominate, with the other serving as the 'critique', or opposition. The dominant paradigm could be called scientism. The critique could be called humanism; it is more concerned with the implementation of social values. In legal theory, these two orientations have been called the positivist and natural justice traditions. In public policy, these have been called actor-oriented and structural theory:

The first approach emphasizes decision-making and rationality whereas the second focuses on institutions, procedures, role patterns, rules, myths and resources. Although the first research strategy has hitherto

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<sup>1</sup> A wilderness area must be of a sufficient area to conserve biological resources or a 'gene pool' to be sustainable. Hence, national parks for museum specimens of natural habitats are unsustainable. Recently, for example, one half of Yellowstone National Park in the United States burned in one fire.

been the dominant mode in policy analysis, the relevance of organizational theory to the interpretation of policy processes is increasing. *The methodological bridge between an actor approach and a structural framework has always been considered so large as to be unbridgeable*.<sup>1</sup> (emphasis added)

Along similar lines, there are generally considered to be two competing strands of Planning thought that date back to the scientific management and social reform traditions. For brevity, I call these Rationalism (the mainstream) and Pluralism (the critique).

Rationalism in Planning could be considered a subset of scientism: the belief that science alone produces valid knowledge. Scientism seeks laws of cause and effect, generally with the goal of prediction. Knowledge is seen as being objectively-based and cumulative, and the scientific method is seen as applicable to all human problems.<sup>2</sup> Thus, it is held that true knowledge in the social sciences can be found by applying modes of thought and methods of research from the 'hard' (mathematics and natural) sciences.<sup>3</sup> Rationalist Planning has therefore emphasized scientific method, prediction and modelling. Its implicit values are (cost) *efficiency and control*.

While Rationalist Planning has focussed on the individual decision maker, or actor, Pluralist Planning, in contrast, has emphasized the socio-political process, which is envisaged as interest groups or individuals competing for political influence. Again, its central concern has been *distributional justice* or 'equity', as distinguished from Ethics as I use the term (defined in Chapter 1). As the above quote suggests, these paradigms are generally regarded as dichotomous. Rationalists have sought an ideal calculus or form of technical method based on the assumptions that lie behind engineering and economics. Pluralists have sought an ideal form of politics, based on the assumption that the democratic process will promote the common good.

Contrary to the conventional wisdom, however, these Planning paradigms share underlying premises. They merely focus on different aspects of decision making within the same meta-ethic. That is, Rationalists are concerned with the 'scientific' techniques upon which experts base their selection of alternative plans or actions. Pluralists, on the other hand, are concerned with plan adoption and implementation - the 'politics' by which alternative plans or actions are chosen. This chapter focuses on Pluralism because we are exploring the social context and

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<sup>1</sup> Jan-Erik Lane, 1990, *Institutional Reform: A Public Policy Perspective* (Aldershot: Dartmouth) at p.2.

<sup>2</sup> Auguste Comte (1798-1857) was an early exponent of positivism in the humanities. Along with St. Simon, he was credited with inventing sociology, the 'science' of society.

<sup>3</sup> Mathematics and natural sciences are 'hard', in that they seek knowledge; humanities (eg. philosophy) are 'soft', and seek wisdom.

political aspects of Planning theory first. Later, when discussing Planning methods, we look more closely at Rationalism.

When these orientations are seen as concerned with different stages of the decision-making process (decision making and decision taking),<sup>1</sup> we realize that they are quite compatible and not exclusive. Theorists concerned with the final decision (decision taking) may generally accept the assumptions of those concerned with preparing the basis for a decision (decision making), and vice versa, but consider the other to be of less significance in terms of planning outcomes. These orientations are also interwoven by mutual influence. For example, mainstream Rationalist Planning has managed to absorb the ideas of the Pluralist critique as practices evolve. It has done this by recasting the concepts in scientific or technical terms. For instance, participatory planning of the 1960s became seen as a rational means of acquiring information in the 1970s.<sup>2</sup>

Not only are they interwoven, but Rationalism and Pluralism are both couched within the Power Paradigm. Planning theory, like the Patriarchal culture at large, elevates that which distinguishes Man from nature, women and matter. Generally, human and natural resources are valued to the extent that they serve Man's purposes. That purpose is a kind of 'manifest' destiny (sometimes called progress). It is based on an idealized, denaturalized portrayal of Man apart from nature. Masculinist values of particular relevance to Planning theory are:

- (a) *purposiveness* - a belief in a special vision of material 'progress';
- (b) *rationality* - a belief in the efficacy of goal-oriented linear thinking;
- (c) *positivism* - a belief in the scientific method as the true source of knowledge;
- (d) *individualism* - a belief in the separateness of the person from the community; *Risk taking* and *competition* are glorified as a means to progress;
- (e) *autonomy* - a belief in Man's ability to choose his own principles of action; and finally,
- (f) *control* - a belief in Man's ability to gain control over society, nature and human destiny.

As we later see, these Masculine values pervade Planning in all areas - structure, theory, method and process. It is no coincidence that these values coincide with those that are associated with Masculinity: what is valued in a culture can be ascertained by defining its concept of maleness. The elements of this value system reflect Man's insecurity, and the desire to achieve certainty in a chaotic world by controlling nature and the future. Planning

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<sup>1</sup> The distinction between decision 'making' and decision 'taking' was made by Andreas Faludi, 1973, *Planning Theory* (Oxford: Pergamon).

<sup>2</sup> Rosemary Whip, 1977, "Social Research Methods in Planning", in John C. Western and Paul R. Wilson, eds., *Planning in Turbulent Environments* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press) pp. 17-31, at p. 24.

techniques, which are modelled upon science, have been centred on prediction (rather than prevention) as a means of coping with uncertainty.<sup>1</sup> With a focus on prediction, only disasters that can be predicted will be prevented. For example, global warming has not yet been taken very seriously in the mainstream because it is 'unproven'. Or, again, because we do not have the capacity to predict the synergistic interactions of different chemicals or biogenetic experiments in the environment, it is not a 'problem' until there is measurable damage, if at all. (Thus, L-Tryptophan, a genetically-engineered product, was allowed to be sold as a health food. To date it has killed 32 people.)<sup>2</sup>

While Rationalism is concerned with prediction and control of the future through scientific knowledge, Pluralism relies on Man's supposedly 'innate competitive nature' to provide predictability, and hence a means of control. This at first appears contradictory; risk taking and competition, as ultimately manifested in military and technological adventurism, would seem to be the antithesis of control. Nuclear weaponry and biogenetics have made humanity more vulnerable to extinction. However, by manipulating and anticipating what people or markets will do, one can develop strategies for exploiting change or gain power. (On a deeper level, recklessness can be understood as attempts to immunize feeling and block out the knowledge of death; that is, to control reality itself.)<sup>3</sup> Thus Rationalism and Pluralism, rather than being conceptual polarities, are no more than a friendly opposition within the Power Paradigm (Figure 1). While Planning reform efforts have nibbled at the pillars of the Patriarchal edifice, none have really challenged this basic meta-ethic and its Masculine values.<sup>4</sup>

In manifesting the apparent Masculine impulse to predict and control, rather than, say, to seek harmony, Planning is a reflection of social priorities in general. These priorities have led to disastrous consequences that need no recitation here. On all levels of society, vast resources are spent on prediction and control, while almost nothing is spent on prevention. Also, as in society as a whole, Planning practice is oriented towards conflict control, rather than addressing

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<sup>1</sup> See Patsy Hallen, 1989, "Careful of Science: A Feminist Critique of Science", *The Trumpeter* 6 (1) (Winter) pp. 3-8, for a discussion on Patriarchal values in Science; Sandra Harding, 1991, *above* (NY: Cornell University Press); Evelyn Reed, 1978, *above* (NY: Pathfinder); Londa Schiebinger, 1989, *above* (MA: Harvard University Press).

<sup>2</sup> "Four Corners", Australian Broadcasting Commission TV, 20 April, 1992.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Lawlor, 1991, "Male Power on Earth", in John Matthews, ed., *Choirs of the God: Revisioning Masculinity* (SF.: Thorsons) pp 210-233.

<sup>4</sup> Because Planning scholars have traditionally tended to see the critique as oppositional, some have sought a 'meta-theory' which can encompass the dichotomous tradition in planning thought. I later contend that such a synthesis would only further entrench the underlying premises. See for example, P. Healey, G. & T. McDougall, and J. Michael, eds., 1982, *Planning Theory, Prospects for the 1980s* (London: Pergamon Press); Andreas Faludi, 1982, "Towards a Combined Paradigm of Planning Theory?", second edition, in Chris Paris, ed., *Critical Readings in Planning Theory* (Sydney: Pergamon Press) pp. 27-38.

the causes of conflict (which are, of course, beyond the present scope of Planning). For example, the world military spends in the order of US\$900 billion dollars on the arms race annually to 'deter' war by making war, through both psychic terror and physical aggression, yet spends less than one percent of that budget on prevention, or peace-building efforts.<sup>1</sup> Developed countries spend on average 5.4% of GNP for military purposes as opposed to 0.3% aid to developing countries.<sup>2</sup> For every one dollar the United States spends on environmental protection, for instance, it spends 126 dollars on the military.<sup>3</sup> A final example:

The cost of protecting endangered species from illegal trade and funding additional field projects is [US] \$5 million a year. The UNEP budget for combating pollution in the oceans is 2.6 million a year. All this could be achieved for \$8 million, 5 minutes worth of arms spending.<sup>4</sup>

### Pluralism defined

Having suggested that the paradigm underlying (both descriptive and normative) *political* theory in Planning is what I term Pluralist, we will now look in more detail at Pluralism.

(Rationalism, the operative paradigm underlying Planning methods, is discussed later.)

Pluralism interprets society as a contest among competing interests, groups or classes and hence construes social conflict as groups, classes, or individuals competing for political influence. Politics is a series of conflicts between different private interests, or alliances of interests, over the control of social or natural resources. The government is often assumed (by liberals) to be a neutral arbiter in this struggle or, in some cases (by those on the left), another interest group.

Pluralism underlies major social reforms of the 60s and 70s in the United States. The basic concepts of U.S. environmental legislation of the late 60s and early 70s were also inspired by, or at least reflect, Pluralist theory. Pluralism in Planning found explicit definition in a rather short-lived Planning theory that was introduced by Paul Davidoff in 1965. This traditional pluralist theory was an attempt to make Planning processes conform to the liberal ideal and provided a theoretical legitimation for 'advocacy planning'.<sup>5</sup> Advocacy planning emerged in the wake of the social disruption associated with post war redevelopment (slum clearance) programs, and the widely-noted gap between comprehensive plans and their implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, in 1986, the International Year of Peace, the world spent over (U.S.) \$900 billion on military activity. Source: Frank Barnaby, ed., 1988, *The Gaia Peace Atlas: Survival into the Third Millennium* (London: Gaia Books) at p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Frank Barnaby, ed., 1988, *above* p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> Seth Shulman, 1990, *Nuclear Times* (Autumn).

<sup>4</sup> Frank Barnaby, ed., 1988, *above* p. 109.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Davidoff, 1965, "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning", *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 1 (November) pp. 331-338.

Some planners had begun to work as advisers and advocates to assist disadvantaged community groups to develop 'counter-plans' in response to government plans and proposals that would disrupt their communities. Advocacy planning, while initially associated with pluralist theory, later evolved into progressive planning. Progressive planning was influenced by the critical social theory of the Frankfurt School (Chapter 11) and rejected many of the naive assumptions of pluralist theory. (The following section on pluralism and its usefulness may cover familiar territory for those with a background in Planning, but is necessary to inform other readers.)

Paul Davidoff's pluralist theory represents the conservative wing of Pluralism, while the more left-wing approach is represented by, say, John Forester's version of progressive planning (below). I first show that traditional pluralism is unsatisfactory for issues of social justice (2 dimensions), which should come as little surprise. I then suggest that progressive planning, while perhaps adequate to address social issues, is unsatisfactory for environmental issues (3 dimensions). The problem definition and framework of analysis created by the Pluralist paradigm, even in its progressive form, does not fit the essential nature of the environmental problem. Thus it creates impediments to environmental problem solving. Let us begin by defining narrow pluralist theory and its application to social justice.

Traditional pluralist theory holds that people inevitably have different needs and claims around which they coalesce into groups. Groups are structured on many kinds of alliances - ethnic, racial, religious, gender, economic, locational, educational, occupational, and so on: Every individual has a plurality of interests and, therefore, many and varied group allegiances.<sup>1</sup> One group recognizes an issue relevant to its needs and acts to influence a political outcome. Then other groups form to speak for their claims, becoming countervailing forces. As many problems are beyond the resources of single-issue groups, these groups tend to conjoin (formally or informally) to influence government policy to their advantage.<sup>2</sup>

As individuals have overlapping group allegiances, it seems to follow that power is also dispersed, such that no elite can totally monopolize resources or power. This is because, in traditional pluralist theory, power is seen as a function of people (groups or classes), not systemic biases. Furthermore, elites are assumed to be heterogeneous in their views and affiliations, so that self-interests are cancelled out in the long run. Therefore, it is reasoned, no one group structure has complete control over any constituency. The fact that both public and private interests are represented by groups is given primacy, rather than other characteristics (hierarchical dualism and gender) that might allow us to better theorize the differences of scale, power, interests and resources.

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<sup>1</sup> This is not the case for the urban isolated poor - particularly single mothers and migrants.

<sup>2</sup> Mainstream green groups seldom strategize together on campaigns.

Means of influence are also portrayed as dispersed. Although perhaps unequally distributed, access to policy making is considered available to all. For example, there are many points of access into the many tiered decision-making apparatus of democratic government, providing the opportunity for many different forms of influence. Because different social and economic institutions are influenced by different groups, power is (in theory) effectively decentralized. This overlap of interests gives the system a set of 'checks and balances' such that all groups can affect policy and no one group or interest can dominate.

In pluralist theory it is further reasoned that interest group action improves policy making. Political debate benefits from adversary action as a broader range of claims and issues are brought before the public. Elites, lay workers, and voluntary organizations all interact to influence each other in constructive ways. It is also believed that these countervailing interests tend to balance out, so that basic needs are eventually satisfied. Because individuals have multiple, even conflicting affiliations, conflicts in a pluralist system will also be non-violent. Thus, a pluralist system creates a form of social cohesion by directing competing groups toward constructive ends and keeping conflict within reasonable limits. Conflict is therefore a natural function. The purpose of social policy is to manage conflict by ensuring it remains pluralist in character. In short, society is an aggregate of atomistic groups and individuals with many varied, overlapping and changing networks of interests, in a state of stable conflict.

### Applicability of pluralism<sup>1</sup>

Having defined the Pluralist paradigm, I suggest that it screens out many relevant facts, or interprets them in a way that obscures important issues, in ways which increase environmental conflict. As control over social and natural resources is the main source of power and security, it is not objectionable that environmental conflict is commonly defined in Planning literature as one of 'competing interests' over resources. However, the competing interests in resource allocation could be just as accurately described as pyramidal. While there are diverse subcultures and belief systems in Western society, a plurality of subcultures does not mean that the resource allocation system is also pluralist in character.

Pluralism is in fact an idealized abstraction of how Planning in a market system *should* work, not how it does work in reality. We now look at how Pluralism (a) is wedded to an ideological myth based on invalid assumptions, and (b) distracts analysis away from perhaps the most crucial environmental issue: the increasing power of competing special interests in resource allocation. The paradigm disadvantages the environment because it enshrines an

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<sup>1</sup> Janis Birkeland, 1972, *The Value and Limitations of Advocacy Planning* (Berkeley: University of California, Department of Architecture). See also Donald F. Mazziotti, , "The Underlying Assumptions of Advocacy Planning: Pluralism and Reform", in Chris Paris, ed., *Critical Readings in Planning Theory* (Sydney: Pergamon Press) pp. 207-225.

androcentric value system that devalues such concepts as a public interest, community, altruism, and an environmental Ethic which are essential to environmental protection.

For widespread acceptance, a theory must be logically compatible with the dominant social ideology. A Planning theory must therefore provide definitions of Planning purposes that are compatible with capitalist beliefs. However, to be useful to reform, a theory must define and explain the reality of the socio-economic and political context. Where there is a significant divergence between theory and reality, the theory becomes not only unhelpful in inspiring questions and insights, it becomes ideological, in that it helps to preserve existing power relations in society. Thus, although the Pluralist interpretation of society has inspired many sound ideas which should be retained as part of our repertoire of legislative concepts, the rights-based ethic instilled by that paradigm has come to undermine those very ideals.

The problem is that Pluralism interprets society in terms of individual or inter-group conflict, when the dispositive conflict is special interests versus a general public interest in sustainability and natural amenity. Many practitioners and students see Planning as reconciling public and private interests, but it cannot do so in an institutional framework, composed of market, political and legal arenas, which are structured on a pluralist paradigm and problem definition. The paradigm conceals the nature of environmental conflict by perpetuating certain myths. These myths serve to reinforce the position of the beneficiaries of the resource allocation system by concealing the subtle ways in which power operates. To explain this, four basic myths are presented in a packaged tour of some communitarian critiques of pluralist theory. These myths have been pointed out, yet the pluralist framework still endures. This is demonstrative of the profound advantage that paradigm control provides the powerful.

#### Power cannot be monopolized

A fundamental tenet is that power cannot be monopolized in a pluralist system. As noted above, pluralism holds that people have many types of interests, alliances and avenues of political influence, and therefore that no one interest group can monopolize all resources or influence in any significant sphere. Therefore, if interest group competition is pluralist, no special interest group can obtain undue power because of the inherent checks and balances of the system. But interest groups do have monopolistic power.<sup>1</sup> Private firms and conglomerates have obtained control over vast resources (the micro-level example of Tasmania is given in Appendix 1). Because they monopolize resources, many large corporations today are not subject to the controls of the market.<sup>2</sup> Nor are they reliant upon government. The former dependent relationship of corporations with the State has largely reversed (Chapter 4).

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<sup>1</sup> See generally, G. William Domhoff, 1983, *Who Rules America Now? A View for the 80s* (NJ: Prentice-Hall).

<sup>2</sup> See generally, J.K. Galbraith, 1973, *Economics and the Public Purpose* (MA: Houghton Mifflin).



Many firms are now able to carry out the large-scale Planning and capital intensive activities for which they once looked to the state.

Furthermore, corporations have the power to dictate macro-planning policy: that is, to stabilize prices and costs, or to plan resource use. This explains why public services aimed at assisting large corporations tend to grow faster than other parts of the public sector.<sup>1</sup> Today, some special interests are more powerful than public agencies, or even nation states, as evidenced by bribes of sufficient magnitude to alter foreign affairs policy (for example, the Lockheed<sup>2</sup> or Contragate scandals). As a consequence, individuals or corporations have, in some cases, more power to 'regulate' our lives than did government authority in the past. In fact, their power is such that they can not only influence prices and costs, but can persuade consumers how to think.<sup>3</sup>

### Freedom to choose

Pluralism presupposes a democratic system through which groups can vie over meaningful choices. This assumption has the effect of reinforcing the notion that the system is substantively (as opposed to procedurally) democratic. However, voting for representatives does not, in reality, mean choosing the kind of policies we want or the environment in which we wish to live. Environmental issues that lend themselves to public exposure and debate around election time are not of a substantive or systemic nature. They do not concern Planning issues, but rather a determination of which groups will prevail; for example, whether to dam or not to dam a particular river. Moreover, not all forms of power are exercised within the scope of public purview or control. Through various forms of monopoly, power can be exercised by industry even without the support or acquiescence of government.

Many decisions are largely determined by the market rather than government, such as the content of mass media, income distribution or location of industries. Such decisions greatly affect social resources and the form and quality of the living environment.<sup>4</sup> In Planning practice, for example, most choices are limited to alternatives that are defined by private developers. Groups can petition and protest, but such tactics must centre on issues with symbolic value, for instance, wild rivers, endangered species, or the demolition of historic

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<sup>1</sup> J.K. Galbraith, 1973, *above*.

<sup>2</sup> Bribes create a market that otherwise do not exist for nuclear plants and arms: see generally Anthony Sampson, 1977, *The Arms Bazaar* (London: Hodder and Stoughton).

<sup>3</sup> J.K. Galbraith, 1973, *above*.

<sup>4</sup> See generally R. Friedland, 1983, *Power and Crisis in the City's Corporations, Unions and Urban Policy* (NY: Schocken Books).

buildings.<sup>1</sup> Thus, despite the rapid and irreversible alienation of the natural environment, community pressure is proscribed by corporate and private property interests to relatively small issues.

But most significant is the fact that the social ideology limits the range of alternatives to issues of consumption. Debate is over the relative distribution of material benefits, such as the quantity of housing, jobs, or wilderness areas. Nothing which challenges basic premises can be debated, such as the structure of private property and ownership, or the many indirect public subsidies to developers. Democracy in a liberal system, then, means participation in consumption.

### The system is sound

Another myth of pluralism is that the basic distribution system is sound because dramatic changes cannot occur. This reason is that pluralism underwrites an incremental policy and decision-making process. Pluralists assume that the public interest can be met through the resolution of local, short-term conflicts. Incremental improvements can gradually balance out the distribution of resources and environmental amenities (by consuming more of the natural environment). Given the premise that the reason for environmental management is the 'need to balance the interests' in resource consumption (Chapter 6), an incremental decision-making processes would certainly suffice - provided that the socio-economic system is just. Pluralism presumes the basic problems of human life have been resolved by providing for the economic well-being of a majority. The only problem remaining is the redistribution of material goods and services to those now at the margins. However, it only needs to be said that the gap between the rich and the poor continues to broaden.<sup>2</sup>

The belief in private property and exchange contains a basic paradox: private property and capital accumulation deprives those without property and capital of their freedom (Chapter 3). There is presently no mechanism for limiting private wants for the sake of the public good. It is the very structure of the laws, institutions and rules of the game (as well as social norms) that prohibit the equitable distribution of costs and benefits. When the problems that threaten sustainability and social welfare are embedded in an ethic and institutional structure, marginal restructurings and ameliorative, ad hoc, programs can at best only postpone the inevitable collapse.

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<sup>1</sup> A major problem in campaigns to save native forests is that the general public often does not appreciate the differences between forests. If there are other forests still in existence, why save one in particular? Consequently, activists must usually focus on a particular species, such as the famous spotted owl.

<sup>2</sup> From 1981 to 1988, there was a net transfer from the Third World to lender countries of over 150 billion, while Third World debt rose from \$748 to \$1,319 billion dollars. Source: Paul Ekins, Mayer Hillman, and Robert Hutchinson, 1992, *Wealth Beyond Measure: An Atlas of New Economics* (UK: Gaia Books) at p. 25.

### The government is neutral

Traditional pluralist theory assumes government to be an independent and neutral arbiter through which interests groups seek political influence, although government can also act as a *self*-interested party. However, special interests dominate resource allocation policy at all levels. For instance, lobbies for special interests groups often cause bills to be either passed or blocked against the wishes of the clear majority.<sup>1</sup> Military and corporate looting of the productive capital of the system for short term profits or power is dramatically increasing pressure on the environment. Not just resources, but public dollars are flowing to private hands.<sup>2</sup> According to John Hanrahan, one fourth of the United States federal budget is spent on services provided by private contractors: democratic oversight is made more difficult because the transfers are poorly monitored, especially in the areas of defence and energy.<sup>3</sup> There is little public accountability in such deals.

In addition, the 'revolving door' between regulated industries, universities, and government agencies creates a certain similarity of interests. Planning and resource management courses in universities reproduce an instrumentalist ideology which ultimately serves the interests of industry - as much as do university forestry departments. The intimate and growing relationship of government, university, and industry removes much from public surveillance (as the case study illustrates, Appendix 1).

Governments seldom put forth comprehensive, ethics-based policies against which decisions can be evaluated (as opposed to ad hoc decisions).<sup>4</sup> Special interests often operate on a policy-making level to fill this vacuum. Special interests market policy ideas through such 'think tanks' as the Heritage Foundation and American Enterprise Institute in the United States, or the Institute of Public Affairs, National Civic Council and H.R. Nicholls Society in Australia. Powerful corporate lobbies have been called "legalized corruption", as they prevent the creation and implementation of a consistent public resource policy.<sup>5</sup> For example, the irreversible decision to allow life forms to be patented in the U.S. was not made in the context of public debate, but was, in effect, made by industry lobbyists.

In any case, what forward or strategic planning does exist in the public sector is nugatory against the power of special interests. Large corporations do the real planning, while

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<sup>1</sup> See generally Amitai Ezioni, 1984, *Capital Corruption: The New Attack on American Democracy* (CA: Harcourt Brace Jonanovich).

<sup>2</sup> See generally Seymour Melman, 1983, *Profits Without Production* (NY: Alfred A. Knopf).

<sup>3</sup> See generally John D. Hanrahan, 1983, *Government by Contract* (NY: W.W. Norton).

<sup>4</sup> Sometimes opposition parties have developed a comprehensive set of policies, however, such as the environmentalist parties in Australia - the Australian Democrats and the Greens.

<sup>5</sup> Ezioni, 1984, *above*.

government struggles to mitigate social costs and dislocations, fund pollution clean up and waste disposal, and search for new resources. For example, Love Canal (a housing development built upon a toxic waste dump in the U.S) cost about US\$250 million to clean up, and the cleaning up of other priority sites in the U.S. is estimated at \$100 billion.<sup>1</sup> Corporate domination is an issue that has not been adequately addressed in reform proposals for Planning and environmental legislation. To do so would require that the investment decisions which shape land use and resource allocation be publicly controlled.<sup>2</sup>

In summary, pluralism does not describe socio-political reality in a useful way. It fits a market ideology but not political reality, and tends to obscure the pyramidal character of power in contemporary society. But while traditional pluralism has been largely abandoned, the underlying model of Man and society upon which it is based still persists, and is found even in progressive planning thought. Let us now look at the applicability of pluralism to the third dimension, the environment.

### Pluralism and the environment

How does Pluralism impede our ability to resolve environmental conflict usefully? Pluralist ideology creates a perceptual barrier which serves the interests of the powerful at the expense of the natural environment in several ways. Pluralism: (a) legitimizes a power-based, competitive social structure; (b) depicts humanity as divorced from nature and 'community'<sup>3</sup>; (c) delegitimizes the concept of the 'public interest'; (d) privileges corporations over the state. (e) obscures the conflict between special interests and the public interest; (f) portrays the environmental issue as conflict among competing interest groups having equal 'claims' to resources; (g) conceives of 'ethics' in the narrow sense of (rights-based) egalitarianism, and finally; (h) is based on (consumer) preferences, which favours short term interests.

(a) I have already suggested that Pluralism reinforces the competitive social structure because of the androcentric model of Man upon which it is based. It does so by, among other things, construing human relations as a series of bilateral or contractual exchanges. This conception of relationships tends to exclude the idea of moral obligations, such as those a parent has to a child or humans have toward other species. Thus pluralism reinforces a power-based social structure where a person's standing in society is determined by bargaining power

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Ekins, Mayer Hillman, and Robert Hutchinson, 1992, *above* at p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> See generally Mark Hertsgaard, 1983, *The Atomic Brotherhood* (NY: Pantheon) for discussion on corporate domination of public investment decisions.

<sup>3</sup> By community, I mean a relationship of mutuality and reciprocity, rather than a parochial identification with a particular group.

and competition. This 'contractual' metaphor for human relationships allows little space for plants, animals, and children who cannot bargain or consent. Also, the focus on market and resource exchange devalues social skills in such areas as communication, caring and conflict resolution - what are often considered as 'women's skills'. (The power-based conceptions of instrumental Rationalism and competitive Pluralism have not yet totally colonized the women's cultures, but these cultures have been made invisible by the Patriarchal prism.)

(b) Pluralist ideology reinforces the estrangement of Man from the Feminine, community and nature. Pluralism portrays the 'self' as separate from nature and community - yet we are what we are because of nature, culture and emotional bonds. The Pluralist interpretation of human nature makes the political doctrine of liberalism seem preordained. Liberalism holds that the function of government is to protect basic individual liberties while not imposing any particular conception of the good life or human fulfilment. But liberal thinkers have tended to devalue the idea of community by excluding it from its conception of what is *essential* to human well being while, on the other hand, reifying individual rights. Similarly, liberalism depicts political activity as a mere means to an end (or means to the achievement of power) rather than an important aspect of community involvement and personal development.<sup>1</sup>

(c) Because of its focus on the individual or groups of individuals, Pluralism devalues the public interest. A cliché that derives from this ideology, often heard in Planning circles, is that "no one can speak for the public interest". Among planners, it is often said that there is no public interest - only an accumulation of individual needs and interests which others cannot judge morally, or in any other way. One might have thought that the destruction of the life support system and military conflict would be against a 'public interest' in survival. But this problem is overcome by a tautology: people are (by definition) self-interested actors, and since Pluralist politics (by definition) maximizes self-interest, the public interest is (by definition) co-extensive with the sum of private interests, so the public interest is thereby served (by definition). Pluralism in planning is therefore a public decision-making model that is paramorphic with the market.

(d) Pluralism privileges corporations over the state. By dropping the 'public interest' from the equation, the public sphere becomes synonymous with the state ('public sector') and thus conceived as something in opposition to individual rights (or the 'private sector'). This is supported by the fundamental division in Patriarchal society between the private and public

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<sup>1</sup> These latter two points also apply to some environmentalists as well. For example, deep ecology is primarily focused on the self in relation to the total environment. Although deep ecologists advocate community, it is not a core element of the paradigm they advocate. See Freya Matthews, 1992, "Relating to Nature", in *Ecopolitics V* proceedings, ed. Ronnie Harding (Sydney: Centre for Liberal & General Studies, University of NSW) pp. 489-496. Also, as argued in Part III, many greens seek political power (or at least influence through a mass movement) as a prerequisite to bringing about change.

spheres. Further, the human element is associated with private (Pluralist) interests and the impersonal state is associated with public (non-Pluralist) interests. This means, for example, that the private sphere (property and family) is to be protected and preserved from intrusion by the public sphere (the state). Thus, corporations, being fictional 'individuals', are often regarded in law as if they belong to the private pluralist sphere, and the U.S. Courts have therefore protected the rights of corporations as fictional individuals, while simultaneously eroding the Constitutional rights of (less powerful) individual citizens. The Bill of Rights was, of course, designed to limit government power over individuals, not over private corporations or institutions such as the armed forces.<sup>1</sup> However, this public/private dichotomy has enabled the corporate sector to receive state protection from citizen's rights-based challenges.

(e) Pluralism supports special interest claims to public resources by interpreting environmental conflict in terms of competing private interests (or, alternatively, the individual against the government). But the pivotal conflict is not competing (private) interest group demands. As I have already argued, the crucial environmental conflict is that between the public interest and special interests, and it is fast becoming the life and death struggle of our species. Since the concept of a public interest does not fit the pluralist model, pluralist theory does not recognize this fundamental conflict of interests. As we have seen, because the ideology defines social problems in terms of inter-group conflict, the solution is defined in terms of equity (rights) rather than Ethics (responsibilities). When applied to the environment, the problem becomes: the need to "balance the interests in conservation and development". This means trading-off a bit of public land each year for development, which is patently unsustainable.

(f) In liberal society, the cultivation of ethical principles and relationships is deemed to belong to the private domain of home and family. This means that determination of principles are not matters for public agreement, but for individual conscience. The function of the public sphere, therefore, is to work out only those rules or codes which best enable people to pursue their private ends without interfering in the rights of others. Consistent with this tenet, the pluralist paradigm does not recognize 'Ethics', except in the narrow utilitarian sense of determining rules by which to live or make choices. (However in reality, as we later see, this selection of rules has been largely *predetermined* by the technocracy where superordinate goals such as 'efficiency' underlay the decision rules). Since equal rights fills the place of ethics in this paradigm, ethical decision making means balancing competing interests in resources or maximizing aggregate individual welfare through consumption.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Charles A. Reich, 1991, "The Endangered Individual", *California Lawyer* (July) at p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> The utilitarian conception of the greatest good for the greatest number does not recognize that the community is greater than the sum of its individuals.

(g) In a paradigm that does not recognize altruism or responsibilities, but only rights, values tend to be equated with preferences. As people are of equal value, their values would appear to be equal. It would follow then, that the 'claims' or preferences of environmentalists and developers must therefore be equal. This is because, in this paradigm, competing claims, and values have the status of constitutive elements. On the other hand, Ethics and altruism (like the 'public interest') are outside the paradigm, and therefore are seen as irrelevant or ephemeral. This explains why, when planners allocate land to development, such as subdivisions or timber preserves, many believe it suffices to set aside a percentage for environmentalists to 'use'. Within this pluralist, instrumentalist framework, the environmentalist 'claim' is assumed to be for recreational or other 'use', rather than simply an Ethical concern for life - even though many greens do not hope or intend to even visit some of the environments they work to protect.

(h) Because the paradigm favours preferences over moral responsibilities, pluralist decision-making systems are biased toward short-term interests. Over time, a Pluralist process designed to settle individual claims and determine the most 'efficient' use of land in a case-by-case basis has led to the incremental reduction of cultural and biological diversity and environmental quality - and will continue to do so until there are scarcely any remnants of a 'natural' world left. The Pluralist model, which depicts the environmental problem as competing claims to environmental goodies, has militated against belief systems that value community and nature.

### **Progressive planning**

Progressive planners certainly recognize the inequalities of power and the existence of a public good, but nonetheless treats humans in atomistic terms, society as the dynamic of competing interests and conflicting demands, and social change is therefore believed to be a product of struggle. Arguably, most progressive planners are ensconced in the Pluralist paradigm. Thus, while progressive planning overcomes some of the criticisms of pluralist planning that pertain to social justice, it is inadequate as a paradigm with which to address environmental problems.

John Forester's book, *Planning in the Face of Power*, provides an exemplar of the progressive position. It is informed by Critical Theory (in particular, the work of Habermas). His theory is an actor-oriented one which does not look at the psychological and structural dimensions. Rather, he looks at what progressive planners, as individuals, can do to redress the power imbalance involved in the development approval process. "To focus on power structures while neglecting planners' strategies will produce paralysis, not empowerment."<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, however, the context of the planner is now changing dramatically; and public

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<sup>1</sup> John Forester, 1989, *Planning in the Face of Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press) at p. 102-103.

planners may become expendable altogether (Chapter 4). Thus, in developing strategies, planners ignore structural and contextual forces at their peril.

Although recognizing the structural injustices of capitalist society. Forester subscribes to the Pluralist view that fair procedures lead to (more) fair ends. Due process and democratic argumentation, free from the "distorting influences of concrete productive relations and the structure and policies of the state", will therefore resolve social and environmental problems.<sup>1</sup> In this way, genuine participatory democracy becomes an end, rather than a means to, say, a sustainable society. Consistent with Pluralist ideology, then, this implies that if people are given a real choice and perfect information, they will invariably adopt rational and just solutions. But will they? Only (I would suggest) if the causes of the abuse of power are solely structural and therefore power is only abused by those at the top of the power structure.

Furthermore, improving the fairness of a case-by-case decision-making process when that process is in itself inherently biased against the environment, may contribute to the very communicative distortions Forester hopes to overcome. The very fact of a fair process can obfuscate the inevitability of the outcomes in a power-based social order. For example, development proposals for a given ecologically-sensitive site must periodically be contested, usually by volunteer groups, until a development is eventually approved. Even National Park classification can be rescinded. The fact that trade-offs may have been gained through mediated negotiations does not alter the fact that the ecosystem will be destroyed.

Most notably, Forester does not directly address the issue of ecological sustainability. This is not so much a matter of anthropocentric values as I am sure he is concerned about environmental issues. Instead, it is due to the fact that the Pluralist paradigm cannot wrap itself around the environmental problem.

## Summary

In this chapter we have looked at some inherent biases created by the Pluralist paradigm. I have argued that while Pluralist theory may be a useful aid in resolving social issues, but it cannot comprehend environmental ones. It is difficult to find non-feminist Planning literature that contradicts my contention that environmental conflict is seen as a function of competition over resources among self-interested, but incompatible interests groups (Pluralist). Similarly, professional planning, whether conducted by an advocate or technocrat, is seen as entirely a rational process focused on achieving certain social or selfish (ie. 'rational') goals, and thus ignoring subjective motivations.

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<sup>1</sup> Forester, 1989, *above* at p. 140.



The two main orientations in Planning theory are therefore not oppositional, but merely concerned with different stages of the decision-making and implementation process. Both those that focus on the decision maker's thought processes (Rationalist, technical, or actor-oriented theories), and those that focus on the context and forces operating upon decision makers (Pluralist, political, or structure-oriented theories) operate within the Power Paradigm. They accept in large part the existing socio-political context as natural, given Man's supposedly individualistic, competitive, and self-interested nature (whether a product of culture or biology).<sup>1</sup>

The Pluralist description of reality (which backgrounds the environment), and the social decision-making processes that follow from it, are power-based and designed to balance competing claims to resources. Environmental issues are not merely matters of efficiency in wealth distribution or even equity in consumption. They are fundamentally matters of Ethics in that they involve decisions as to how a society *should* live and what constitutes our responsibility to the planet's ecosystems and species. Many of the crucial issues today (eg. population, wilderness, and species preservation) fall outside this decision-making framework.

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<sup>1</sup> Marxists attribute these characteristics to structural rather than innate causes, and see class rather than groups as major forces for change, and call for struggle rather than competition. However, the androcentric foundations remain. I do not discuss Marxism here because it relies upon capitalism, industrialism, and revolution - which are all incompatible with environmental protection. See Chapter 11.

## CHAPTER 3: RESOURCE ALLOCATION

### **Ecofeminism problem description**

We have seen how the dominant model of Man as rational, competitive and striving for freedom (whether by virtue of modes of production or biology), has underwritten an interpretation of environmental conflict as a struggle among conflicting individual, group or class interests in resources. This image of Impersonal Man, and the social and ideological division of public and private spheres that typifies Western Patriarchal society, combine to create a misleading picture of the nature of power relations in resource allocation. An ecofeminist paradigm would shape an alternative description of environmental conflict, and the role of Planning in that conflict. A different paradigm, by providing a different problem description, should in turn suggest different types of reform.

The task of the Planning theorist has been to find a model that reconciles reality with the ideal of Masculine rationality and individualism. The curly bits that do not lend themselves to rational models and strategies are left out of the analysis. In contrast, an ecofeminist would portray conflict over resources not as a contest, but as a pitiful consequence of the abuse of power, stemming more from personal and psychosexual motivations than from rational ones. Our environmental problems are the ultimate manifestation of a power drive that is closely linked to the association of power with Masculinity in a misogynist and hierarchical social order. The elevation of Masculine values and attributes has ultimately led to a pyramidal, capitalist resource distribution where powerful special interests often stand above government or democratic control. This suggests that we must first dissolve the glue that holds the house of cards together: the personal insecurities that fuel the exercise of political power should be brought into the open.

Most planning theorists not only avoid the personal dimension, but they also avoid the big picture. They focus on minor players while the greatest portion of environmental damage and conflict can be traced to the allocation of public goods to powerful, large-scale corporate, military and industrial uses. These consume vast amounts of resources, create vast amounts of pollution, and are inefficient means of creating work. But we become dependent on them when, through public subsidies, they grow big enough to have large economic multiplier effects. The activities of these structures are not subject to public consensus, planning, or supervision. Despite their enormous global impacts, military planning is left to military strategists and corporate planning is left to corporate strategists. Thus, by focusing on the

games of minor players (developers and their opponents), analyses of conflict leave out both the psychological and structural dimensions.

Conflict around the world is essentially over (personal, social and natural) resources. Military conflict, for instance, may seem to be only about obtaining or maintaining political power or dominance. But power is by definition control over resources, and hence the ability to get one's way. When natural resources are not shared, but alienated to private individuals or firms, the competition for resources becomes 'zero sum'; one group or person's gain means another's loss (except in the long term, of course, when everyone loses). This situation reinforces a culturally-inbuilt drive for control over resources, or more power. Competition, power, and environmental conflict are therefore inseparably intertwined.

As structures become more pyramidal, through the concentration of power, the pressure on both firms and individuals to acquire more resources becomes a matter of survival. Although monopolistic in structure and operation, powerful special interests also compete among themselves for control over global resources. Thus, for example, there has been an enormous concentration of power in the resource development corporations, such as agribusiness, forestry and mining. This global corporate resource grab is one of main factors behind the arms race and troubles in the Third World.

The drive to acquire resources, territory and status - in a finite world - leads inevitably to the diminution of the public domain. In the face of diminishing resources, competition becomes greater, fuelling the conflict spiral. This is witnessed in the Tasmanian case history (Appendix 1), and in many other parts of the world, where there is an almost desperate drive by large transnational corporations - and subsistence farmers displaced by corporate activities - to chop down native forests before plantations in Third World countries come on line. The alienation of remaining natural areas to special interests (as has happened quite literally in Tasmania), and the conversion of public goods into commodities, means the decimation of the life support system and reduction of biological diversity.

This conversion process is facilitated by the fact that special interests do not pay the replacement costs of resources (as if environmental 'goods', such as wilderness, were replaceable). The market system is not operative with regard to environmental goods. On several continents, for example, logging companies are clearfelling public land at a net loss to the taxpayer (even or especially when profits soar). Private interests benefit to the detriment of the general public interest in sustainability. The reasons for public subsidies are not always to assist industry, of course. More to the point, the market has become a powerful myth that makes the conversion of public resources to special interests sound democratic. For example, the Tasmanian Forestry Commission debt of A\$500 million, mentioned above, was incurred by the state government largely for nonforestry purposes. The state government used the Forestry Commission as a borrowing agency for general revenue purposes, but the debt did not appear

to be a state debt. Over the last twenty years over 5,000 jobs in the industry have been lost, while the annual cut has doubled. The royalties paid for the timber resource are so low in Tasmania that they do not cover the public costs, and paper recycling is not considered feasible.

The resultant transfer of the public estate to special interests through the political, market and Planning mechanisms generates conflict and instability. The end in store is the irreversible loss of substantial freedom and choice for individuals, which the "free market" system and democracy are supposed to protect. All remaining space will be divided up, packaged and consumed on what is basically a first-come-first-served basis. This is the inevitable result of a system of adversarial competition for ever diminishing space and resources: very different results from that of a system designed to assist us in preparing for the future or providing for long-term community *needs*. According to an ecofeminist analysis (or one which focuses on the abuse of power), then, disputes over resource allocation and their externalities within the market, political and Planning arenas are subsumed by a more fundamental conflict: that between the demands of special private interests and the needs of the human/biotic community.

Socialists, of course, also uphold the idea of a public interest. With regard to its *description* of the environmental crisis, therefore, an ecofeminist analysis might at first seem to coincide with a socialist one. However, disappointingly, socialist theory is almost universally androcentric and instrumentalist with regard to its treatment of nature (and women). It is steeped in 'the androcentric premise' and a Masculinist definition of progress and freedom. Socialists have therefore accepted the idea that the means to saving the environment is through the struggle to determine who 'owns' natural goods or makes the decisions concerning them (rather than, among other things, psychological work). In this sense then, socialist theories are very similar to liberal theories with regard to the environment. The omnipresence of this instrumentalist attitude across the left-right political spectrum is evidenced by the fact that one cannot speak of forests, rivers, deserts, air, land or ecosystems except in terms like resources or public goods and amenities - which imply possessions or things that exist for human use alone. (In the absence of better terminology, I refer to natural entities as environmental 'goods' to distinguish them from 'bads', such as pollution, produced by humans. I do not use the term goods in the sense of things that exist for Man's use.)

Liberalism and socialism are also similar in that they accept their respective *descriptions* of environmental conflict as the basis of prescriptive or normative theory. To put it differently, because they see politics as struggle over who (or which team) makes decisions and, therefore, whose interests prevail, they have a similar conflictual praxis. The liberal game metaphor also leads to 'levelling the playing field' as the 'solution' to conflict. (The game metaphor dominates the language of many reformists as well as the mainstream.) Ecofeminism, in contrast, suggests that we must move beyond any notion of a game. Social and environmental injustice, after all, is no game. Thus, while socialists recognize the public/private nature of

environmental conflict, they buy into the mainstream position that accepts gaining power as a prerequisite to social change, whether through numbers of voters, demonstrators, arguments or guns. A description of social interaction that regards the actors as atomistic, rational 'black boxes' also conceals the operation of power in resource allocation by missing the link between the personal and political (as discussed later). The prevention of competition and the abuse of power requires both new forms of institutions and social relationships.

## Implications

I have suggested that the central issue in environmental conflict is: (a) the transfer of public goods, natural amenities and resources to special interests at a public cost disproportionate to the benefits received by the public (through for instance, invisible subsidies and conflict control), and (b) the transfer or externalization of private development costs over the general public (such as pollution, medical costs, and the loss of social choice and opportunity). But what are the implications of this problem description for our decision-making institutions? The transfer of environmental goods and dispersal of environmental bads is facilitated by ostensibly value-neutral institutions for resource allocation and Planning. In a power-based social structure, institutions such as Planning may be set up with the best of intentions, but they are eventually corrupted to serve the interests of the powerful. This is evident from the fact that, while some acquisition of resources on a world scale is through military conquest, much concentration of power and resources occurs through democratic public institutions which allocate resources - the market, political and Planning systems. For instance, in the political arena, through plant variety rights legislation in the United States, the number of seed companies has been reduced from 120 to 5, and varieties are being deliberately destroyed for monopolistic purposes.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the basic difference between an analysis that relates environmental destruction and social conflict to the abuse of power as opposed to competing interests is this. It necessarily dictates fundamental institutional and social reform. This is because, while there are forums for interest groups to compete within, there is no forum for resolving the Ethical issues inherent in environmental problems. We have systems for managing disputes that arise in the competition for resources and other consequences of misallocation, but not for preventing the problems that gave rise to the misallocations.

The task then is to create institutions that prevent certain interests becoming too powerful, within which democratic decision making can occur. This was the problem facing the designers of the United States Constitution, except that they were concerned with only two dimensions: the individual/private and the social/public spheres. According to an ecofeminist

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<sup>1</sup> See David Godden, 1992, "Proposed Amendments to Plant Variety Rights Legislation", *Ecopolitics VI Conference Proceedings* (Melbourne: RMIT).

problem description, power-based relations and values are embodied in social structures, decision-making systems and the decision makers themselves, so change must be made on at least three dimensions: the personal, social and institutional levels. We need new institutional forms and processes, along with a new consciousness. This requires that we look beyond simply who makes the decisions and where they are made, and develop systems that can accommodate the Ethical nature of environmental issues.

### **Private/public dualism**

We now look at how the sharp distinction between private/public spheres in Patriarchal society creates a bias against Planning as a form of resource allocation. This bias can be traced to the difference between the actual and perceived relationship between these public and private spheres. The public sphere is associated with bureaucracy (command) while the private (market) sphere is associated with freedom. This is ideological in that the conception favours development interests who are in a position to manipulate 'them versus us' thinking and disguise the hierarchical nature of the modern corporatist state. As we see below, this conventional dualistic model of resource allocation is ultimately reinforced and legitimized by hierarchical dualism and the androcentric model of Man. As the connections may seem tenuous at first, let us begin with a snapshot of the argument.

The power of corporations to influence government decision-making does not operate through formal and informal channels alone; it also operates through the systemic biases of the resource allocation system itself. In the rest of this chapter, the aspect I wish to pursue is not so much the structure of the resource allocation system but, rather, how we are conditioned to perceive that system (through for example, ideology and language construction). How we conceptualize the resource allocation system can obscure the means through which power is exercised.

This 'ideological model' is centred on two ideas. The first is that elected representatives stand above the market and bureaucracy (hierarchy). The second is that the Planning system is diametrically opposed to the market system or, at least, seen as constraining economic growth or development (dualism). The false dichotomy between the market and Planning system works to the benefit of corporate, industrial, military, and bureaucratic interests ('CIMBIs'), who, not coincidentally, have the greatest access to the means of shaping public perceptions. Whether deliberate or not, their political advertisements continually reinforce this hierarchical and dualistic model as if it were both accurate and appropriate.

A major outcome of this model is that public and private interests in natural resources are represented as already being catered to by separate, independent institutions - the public Planning and private market sectors. However, the Planning system has a symbiotic relationship with the development sector that is quite different than generally depicted. Rather

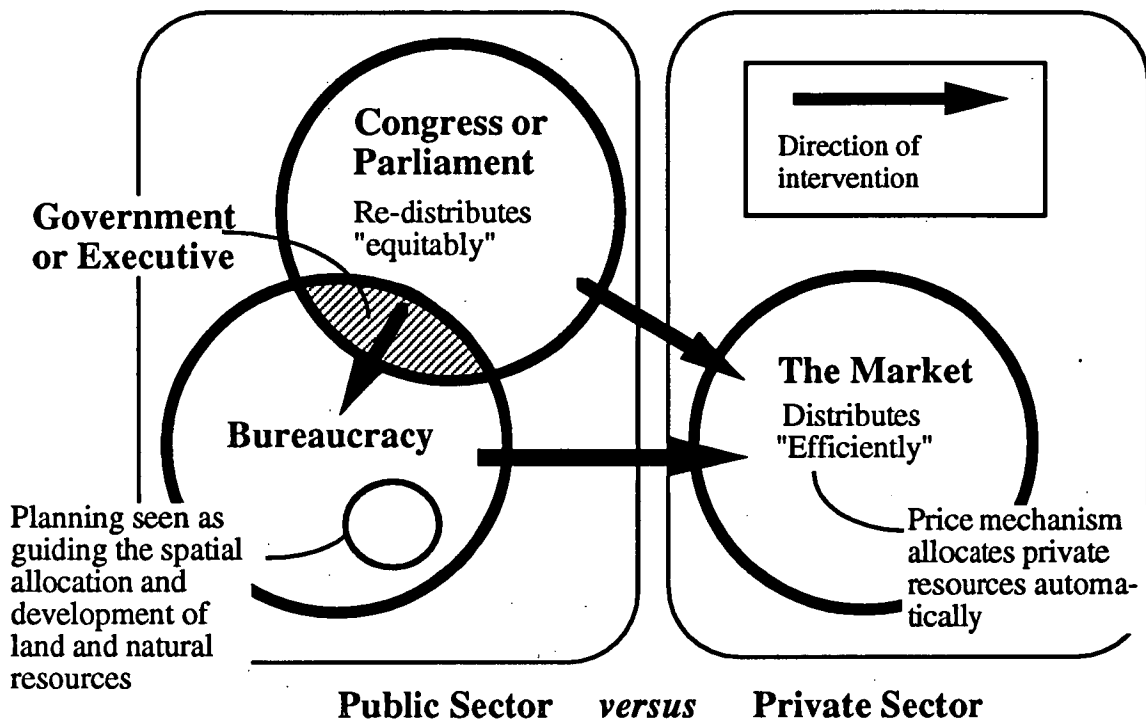
than impeding development interests, it reinforces existing power relationships in resource distribution. Another outcome is that the model conceals the shared interest of the state and market - as well as the unions - in resource consumption as a means of resolving conflict (discussed below).

Using an ecofeminist framework, I propose two antidotes to this cognitive trap. First, I suggest a more appropriated *descriptive* model to clarify the actual relationship between the major decision-making arenas for resource allocation (the Planning, political, legal and market spheres). This model suggests that the resource allocation system is hierarchical, but not dualistic. Then, I suggest a *prescriptive* model to guide the constitutional design of a new resource allocation system that is intended to make long-term environmental protection a possibility or, at least, more a matter of public choice. We first look at problems created by the existing 'ideological' model (to which I believe most unconsciously subscribe), after describing its basic features.

### **Ideological resource allocation model**

Constructed in the popular imagination is a conception of how resource allocation is supposed to work in the real world. This model, however, is constituted by and reinforces Pluralist ideology. It is reproduced by a media which portrays the market as an aggregate of pluralist interests regulated by a government bureaucracy. The bubble diagram (Figure 2) depicts the conventional interpretation of the relationship between the three major resource allocation arenas. It makes a sharp distinction between the allocative mechanisms of the bureaucracy and those of the private sector. (This is already grounds for suspicion, because dualisms in the popular imagination seem invariably to serve the interests of the powerful.) Elected representatives are presumed to be above both the bureaucracy and market, yet the market is juxtaposed against government as a whole. Politicians and regulators are both seen to have power over actors in the market.

**Figure 2: Conventional (descriptive) resource allocation model**



Let us look at some of the elements of this misleading conception of the resource allocation system. Chapter 5 takes up other problems created by this model at the structure level.

### **Planning as a constraint on development?**

The traditional model is based upon who makes decisions and where they are made (the public or private arena - as opposed to, say, how and why they are made. This reinforces the dichotomy between public and private sector activity. The public/private dichotomy is also reinforced by the characterization of government Planning as "intervention" (the direction of influence is indicated by arrows in the diagram). Planning is often defined in terms like a "rational and intentional intervention in the affairs of some ongoing structure".<sup>1</sup> This suggests that regulatory/planning agencies are a 'constraint' on economic growth or an interference in private sector development. However, their intervention into the economy is generally seen to be more pervasive and influential than it in fact is. There is, as we later see, a symbiotic relationship between special interests and the state that is obscured by this hierarchical, dualistic configuration.

<sup>1</sup> John S. Western, 1977, "Planning and Social Planning", in John S. Western and Paul R. Wilson, eds., *Planning in Turbulent Environments* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press) pp. 3-16, at p. 5.



The reality is that government Planning does little to protect the environment largely because the basic decisions, those concerning investment and production, are made by CIMBI's, not planners. That there is, if any thing, insufficient intervention should be clear by the fact that the environment is rapidly deteriorating - even in the West. For example, there are thousands of toxic waste sites in the United States and only a handful have been cleaned up so far, at a public cost of billions of dollars.<sup>1</sup> One can hardly argue, therefore, that the Planning sphere has imposed itself too heavily on industry. Further, the case of toxic wastes can be used as evidence of market inefficiency. The public costs of cleaning up after the fact are necessarily higher than those of legislating to require that these costs be internalized. The market has had ample opportunity to do so on its own.

Such intervention as exists is generally only sufficient to mitigate conflict over the *impacts* of development, and not sufficient to prevent social costs by *guiding* development. Moreover, Planning facilitates the transfer of resources to the corporate sector by directly and indirectly subsidizing development, while displacing conflict to the public sector (Chapter 5). For example: (a) the state covers many forms of infrastructure costs, such as roads, sewers, and airports, to facilitate private investment; (b) as infrastructure and planning costs are covered beforehand, private capital is free for other uses; and (c) Planning provides certainty, thereby freeing up capital that would otherwise be absorbed in 'hedging'. Contrary to its obstructionist image, then, Planning services reduce the capital expenditure of large business and industrial concerns. They are left out of the model because it is a tenet of liberal society that there is no general public interest (just a public sector as against private interests). There *is* a public interest in a safe, secure future and this is jeopardized by short-term, individualistic decision making (resulting in, for example, ozone depletion, deforestation, and erosion).

The dualistic resource allocation model (Figure 2) also conceals both the takeover and manipulation of the public sector by CIMBIs, and the symbiotic relationship of state Planning with the development sector. Big corporations have bankrupted the public sector *and* are now claiming the spoils through privatization. The corporate sector is taking on many Planning functions itself, because working through the Planning bureaucracy is no longer as advantageous as the new corporatist structures are proving to be (Chapter 4). (In Tasmania, for example, the forest industries have cost the public an amount similar to that by which schools were cut back in 1991. These industries are now pushing for corporate sponsorship of schools and, as my own children have discovered, are already influencing the curriculum.<sup>2</sup>)

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<sup>1</sup> Funding of the Superfund program in the United States (for cleaning up toxic waste sites) rose from \$1.6 billion for the first 5 years to \$9 billion in the second 5 years. Source: Gary Cohen and John O'Connor, 1990, *Fighting Toxics* (Wash. DC: Island Press) at p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> For example, a Forest Education Institute, funded by the forest industry, sends 'experts' to children's classes to present the industry line, and their view of the green line.

The public/private dichotomy is, therefore, increasingly less valid as the formative concept for a descriptive model.

### **Planning can protect basic needs?**

Another misleading feature of the ideological model is that it suggests that Planning, as presently conceived, can protect basic human needs. In theory, Parliament or Congress can legislate to provide for basic needs where the market fails to do so. This supposedly provides a check against the excessive ingenuity of free marketeers. In what is generally regarded as a 'negative' function - Planning, health, safety and land use regulations are permitted to constrain market transactions where necessary to protect human welfare. The function of Planning, then, has generally been conceived of as a means to ensure that public needs are met by allocating different parts of the natural and spatial environment for alternative uses; or by regulating or guiding development. However, some progressive planners have argued that Planning regulations and programs have little impact on the location and shape of development - especially as compared to the indirect effects of government subsidies (Chapter 5).<sup>1</sup>

### **Democratic control?**

The conventional or ideological model pictured in Figure 2 obscures the systemic bias against the environment by making environmental destruction appear an inevitable, though regrettable, concomitant of democracy. According to this scheme, the market price mechanism and the Planning process are both seen as subject to democratic control through elected representatives, and therefore accountable to the general public. This means that the private sector is not held responsible for the misallocation of public resources, although businesses benefit from the misallocations for which they lobby. If there are injustices or a misallocation of resources, or if basic needs are not met, this is generally blamed on politicians and their policies. The solution, then, is to work to put those politicians out of office, rather than reform the system.

But this 'solution', of course, is punitive and comes too late to protect the environment. Representative politics or markets are not appropriate for deciding environmental issues that have long-term horizons. The political forum, as presently structured, does not lend itself to consideration of potential futures or the long-term consequences of resource transfers between public and private sectors. Politicians are subject to special interest groups who have a lot to gain now from particular decisions, the cost of which can be distributed over a large future population that cannot vote. As the 1992 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro demonstrated, most politicians do not worry about spillover effects that will occur after they are out of office.

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<sup>1</sup> See Chris Pickvance, 1982, "Physical Planning and Market Forces in Urban Development", in Chris Paris ed., *Critical Readings in Planning Theory* (Sydney: Pergamon Press) pp. 69-82.

Moreover, voters are held ultimately responsible where politicians fail. Bad government is seen as the result of flaws in the collective consciousness. In a word, the general public gets the ultimate blame. In fact, however, with regard to major decisions, powerful business interests control the market, political and Planning processes. They make their own decisions as to the use of public resources. 'Corporatism', where decisions are made by powerful interests negotiating around a table, is becoming the norm (see Chapter 4). This stands in contrast to quasi-judicial decision-making processes based on explicit principles, or an ethics-based framework, as I later discuss.

### Planning is autonomous?

Perhaps the most important conceptual problem is the false autonomy of Planning that is implied by the ideological model. Planning (in the administrative or "fourth branch" of government) appears to be not only structurally autonomous, but diametrically opposed in function, nature, scope, and practice from market or private sector decision making. Thus, one is given the impression that the public sector guides the use and allocation of *public* resources, and the private sector allocates private goods and services, according to different norms and practices. Government and business decision-making goals, processes, concepts, methods and organizational characteristics have traditionally been treated in the literature and schools as very different in character, if not as opposites.

What is the significance of assigning different goals and modes of operation to government Planning and market decision-making? It gives the illusion that the public interest is being protected by a separate sphere that can deal with the special nature of public interest issues regarding the environment and land use. The model obscures the shared interest on the part of government and industry in resource exploitation, and the fusion of the concepts and values of the Planning system with that of private business. In reality, government Planning and business decision making have merged in theory and practice. The trouble with this is that the mainstream economist's construction of reality leads to methods and processes that are inherently biased against the public interest in environmental protection and human rights over the long term.<sup>1</sup>

As suggested earlier, neither the market nor the political arena can address long-term public needs (let alone the needs of other species), because short term *demands* will always take precedence over needs, except where social conflict threatens the system itself. Governments can only effectively deal with short-term issues as dictated by the election cycle. Any major

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<sup>1</sup> See Paul Ekins, ed., 1986, *The Living Economy: a New Economics in the Making* (London: Routledge), and Herman E. Daly and John B. Cobb, Jr., 1989, *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment and a Sustainable Future* (Boston: Beacon Press). These works fail to appreciate that the economic paradigm they criticize is founded upon an androcentric construction of Man and society.

reforms can be undone by the following government. Governments have met market demands through economic expansion, or 'growth', without questioning the efficacy of that approach in meeting basic needs or rights. Moreover, regulation, taxation and subsidies have been used to accommodate consumer demands - or 'needs' created by the market - *as if* they were basic needs or rights. Planners have therefore concerned themselves with resolving conflict over the use and *rate* of supply of public goods to placate interests groups.

In a dualistic system, both government and market are able to blame or shift responsibility for problems onto the bureaucracy which it, in reality, is not empowered to redress. Thus, politicians, on the one hand, set up committees or agencies to study and monitor environmental problems, while business, on the other, bemoan red tape (even in Tasmania, where there is virtually none). Moreover, role identification shapes one's perception of the facts. For example, industry representatives are likely to exaggerate the likely costs of proposed regulations, while government regulators may well inflate their benefits.<sup>1</sup> The problem with such 'misinformation' is that, as John Forester notes, citizens' comprehension of the issues, trust in government, and beliefs are manipulated to their disadvantage.<sup>2</sup> In addition, while the buck is circulating, the public estate continues to be divided up and sold off.

Planning might better be visualized as 'gun fodder' between the market and political spheres, caught in the battle over individual wants and public rights. Yet, while Planning has largely only mitigated conflict and subsidized development, it is *only* Planning, which takes a long-term perspective, that can resolve conflict over basic needs and priorities. Unfortunately, Planning - as it is presently positioned in the resource allocation model, and designed on the premises of the liberal economic paradigm - cannot do so. Thus, there has been an enormous vacuum in the resource allocation system; namely, a public choice arena through which we can determine and provide for basic needs such as world peace and environmental preservation.

### **Planning as big brother?**

The public/private dichotomy also conceals powerful allegiances while simultaneously dividing the general public. One way this occurs is that the market is conceived of as the sum of separate pluralist interests, thus obscuring the integrated structure, and shared values and interests of large organizations.<sup>3</sup> The atomistic framework of liberalism causes many

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<sup>1</sup> Forester, 1989, *above* at p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Forester, 1989, *above* at p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Diversification of products and subsidiary companies is often confused with diversification and decentralization of structures. See, for example, Michael L. Rothschild, 1992, *Bionomics: The Inevitability of Capitalism* (London: Futura), discussed in Chapter 11.

confusions that are manipulated by those with control over, or privileged access to, the media.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, public interest groups and CIMBIs are regarded as having similar motives. For example, environmental groups are often portrayed to be acting in their narrow self-interest, like business, industry and financial groups. This is despite the fact that environmentalists do not benefit more than others in the community from preservation. Similarly, it is assumed that resource extraction interests, such as forestry and mining corporations, have the same interest in preservation as do citizens. Yet, environmental diminution and degradation does not affect corporations *relative* to their competitors. A corporation's relative position is the primary concern of corporate managers (in part owing to the separation of business and citizen roles in Patriarchal society).

On the other hand, the public sector is visualized as a single interest: a monolithic bureaucracy concerned only with tax revenues.<sup>2</sup> Thus, it is easy for those who determine the categories by which problems are described to define government as "big brother" and business as the victim - deflecting attention from the operation of power that occurs outside the formal decision-making apparatus of government. It should be remembered that the initial reason for creating the legal entity called the corporation was to limit the liability of business and therefore promote enterprise, but the environment (or third dimension) was not a consideration at the time this was done. An allocation system that removes decision making from public input and oversight can hardly be capable of ascertaining basic community needs.

### **Planning impedes reform?**

The model also displaces the energies of reformists away from CIMBIs to the public sector. At present, people lobby the politicians, or the statutory gate-keepers of industry, because they generally perceive government to be at the top of the formal decision-making hierarchy. However, private corporations and individuals make the fundamental decisions concerning the environment: what is produced and by what processes and components. Thus, for example, a corporate decision to switch from natural to synthetic substances can have major public consequences, such as producing toxic wastes that will never leave the ecosystem. Similarly, medical research goes into drugs, rather than non-profitable areas such as nutrition. The public are not given a real choice on such investment decisions.

Finally, because the model is dualistic, it enables divisions and allegiances to cement, and this impedes analysis and reform that would be threatening to the power structure. Dualistic frameworks tend to create false choices, such as that between the bureaucracy or market, as if

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<sup>1</sup> See Martin A. Lee and Norman Solomon, 1990, *Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in News Media* (NY: Carol Publishing Group). Noam Chomsky, 1989, *Necessary Illusion: Thought Control in Democratic Societies* (London: Pluto Press).

<sup>2</sup> See generally P. M. Jackson, 1982, *the Political Economy of Bureaucracy* (Oxford: Phillip Allan).

they were necessarily in a zero sum relationship. Relations become adversarial as people get locked into certain positions and lose site of general aims (below). This explains why people divide over whether the market or bureaucracy needs reform, instead of looking for entirely new alternatives. In short, the false dichotomy between the public and private sphere has, in part, prevented us from designing a new resource allocation system, let alone identifying the existing problems usefully.

## Recap

To recap some points, the conventional model of public resource allocation (Figure 2) is ideological in that it creates the false beliefs that: (a) there is a rigid public/private dichotomy, which in fact conceals corporatist and collusive structures; (b) government Planning is capable of checking market excesses; (c) there is democratic control of public resources; (d) Planning theory and practice is different in nature from that of the market, which in fact conceals the shared values and technocratic methods of public and private sector decision making; (e) public as well as private interests are capable of being safeguarded under the present system; (f) basic needs can be met through a decision-making process which in fact obscures the long-term distributional effects; (g) powerful special interests are, above all, pluralist in nature, which in fact conceals the integrated structures and shared interests of CIMBIs; and finally, (h) the model impedes reform by dividing the general public against itself.

But perhaps the main upshot of the above is this: a 'false' government versus free enterprise dichotomy conceals the fact that, at present, there is no sector that is actually both responsible for, and capable of, resolving environmental problems. There is no decision-making system set up with the powers, processes, or conceptual framework adequate to deal with basic needs and other Ethical issues - of which environmental protection is the most fundamental.

To resolve environmental conflict requires that society collectively address fundamental ethical questions about how to reduce population, redistribute the wealth, resolve the Third World debt, recognize the rights and needs of indigenous people and women, eliminate nuclear weaponry and so forth. These issues - which are now left essentially to the invisible hand - mean life and death for real live people at home and abroad, and for the social, cultural, and biological systems upon which they depend. Whether we distribute the spoils of development equitably through the political system or efficiently through the market system will be moot if there is no planet left to divide up.

## Implications of the resource allocation model

Having scanned some of the ways the resource allocation model lends itself to manipulation, what are the implications with regard to environmental protection? As already mentioned, the ideological model conceals the shared interest of the state and market in resource consumption as against preservation. The Patriarchal/capitalist socio-economic system has many *conflict-generating* features brought about by its divisions. To manage these conflicts in the interest of self-preservation, the state has relied on resource consumption or growth. Three examples of the conflicts endemic to this social system are labour versus owner/management, private ownership of land, and the competition for resources.

First, in a competitive market commodities are often produced in excessive amounts. As a result, products are unsold. This means, in turn, that workers are laid off or poorly paid, and cannot therefore buy goods, so producers go out of business, and so on. At a larger scale this 'anarchy of production' leads to a struggle for customers and markets, competition between factory owners and, finally, between states for the world market. Second, the adversarial process of determining wages through relative bargaining power is inherently conflictual. Capital has an interest in maintaining a significant level of unemployment (regardless of profit levels) to keep employees' bargaining power and wages down. The inherent tendency of market systems towards booms and busts amplifies this ongoing conflict. For example, economic downturns create leverage to disempower workers by the threat of layoffs and closures. Recessions are used by CIMBIs to pressure governments into opening up resources for exploitation and to cut back worker gains. The workers' only 'weapon' in response is the mobilization of unions and threats of social disorder, which creates economic insecurity for workers as well as owners. Their only hope is a bigger pie, rather than a bigger portion. Thus labour also has an interest in resource exploitation, especially in times of recession. This is partly why advances in environmental protection, or rather delays in destruction, are also cyclical.

Another systemic division which generates conflict and pressure to open up resources for exploitation is that land use is, in effect, in private control. In a finite world, when land is alienated to private use and development, 'haves' and 'have nots' are created, along with a separate set of interests. This also creates a situation where people are born into a pre-existing distribution of rights and property, and eventually a *de facto* caste system, especially once available 'frontier' land runs out once and for all. This further entrenches a social order where different races, classes and sexes are divided into status and occupation groups, because these groups develop differing values and cultures (being in relative isolation). These differences, in turn, make corresponding social divisions seem natural. By dividing the opposition against

itself, an elite is able to stay in power without force, despite having relatively small numbers.<sup>1</sup> The classes and groups are occupied at fighting each other, rather than questioning the system itself.

Public ownership of land is, of course, no answer in itself. As Daly and Cobb note, even land in public ownership has been of, by, and for resource exploitation interests:

Governments are frequently the largest landowners by far, but have not performed the landlord's function of keeping resource prices high. On the contrary, governments have usually followed a low price policy for resources precisely in the interests of fostering growth and buying peace between labor and capital, at the expense not only of landlords, but also of future generations.<sup>2</sup>

These social divisions are not only structural, but psychological as well. Shared perceptions about the nature of society and humanity influence behaviour. Thus, in Patriarchal society, the competitive social structure and belief that Man is by nature aggressive, competitive and self-interested, creates a self-fulfilling prophecy. People believe that another's gain will be their loss and that their survival depends upon *power over* others. In this social climate, cooperation and altruism are penalized, and the belief that humans are autonomous from community and nature reinforces competitive behaviour and makes ownership and instrumentalist relationships seem natural.

### State's interest in resource consumption

The conflictual nature of Patriarchal/capitalist society creates an interest on the part of the state in resource exploitation, as well as on the part of labour and business. The state is ultimately dependent upon *both* powerful special interests and the general public. The state has an interest in supporting the process of capital accumulation through natural resource exploitation. The state also depends on being able to secure votes and taxes from the general population. Further, state agencies involved in social services, such as Planning, health and welfare, exist by virtue of a disparity in wealth and the dependency of the disadvantaged.<sup>3</sup> The state therefore has an interest in maintaining a dependent, low-income population as well.

Too great a disparity between rich and poor is detrimental for the economy, however, as people cannot purchase goods, yet require more social services. The state and its agencies thus have an interest in preserving the existing unequal but 'balanced' social order upon which they

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<sup>1</sup> See generally Cynthia Enloe, 1989, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (London: Unwin Hyman).

<sup>2</sup> Herman E. Daly and John B. Cobb Jr., 1989, *above* at p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> For example, about 75,000 non-Aboriginal Australians are employed, indirectly at least, through Commonwealth funds expended on Aboriginal affairs, while Aboriginals, as a whole, remain impoverished. Source: Gary Foley, 1992, "The Black Voices", *Age* Melbourne (2 April) at p. 10.



depend. If authoritarian methods of maintaining stable inequality are employed, social chaos and revolution follows at some stage, as has occurred, for instance, in the former satellites of the Soviet Union and in Latin America. In market societies, this balance is maintained by managing social conflict and mitigating the cyclical extremes of unemployment and recession. The state meets its interest in 'stable inequality' while resolving conflict by allocating public resources to development. Thus, when governments speak of the balance between development and conservation, they are really only talking about adjusting the *rate* of consumption.

As the long-term impossibility of continued growth and the irreversible loss of nature and environmental quality has become ever more undeniable, Planning has taken on the function of managing disputes over the environmental impacts of the wealth transfer process that occur through capital-intensive development. As the new descriptive model indicates, Planning is caught in the interstices between the state and market, shifting responsibility and displacing conflict. It is the 'automatic transmission' of the development machine, adjusting the speed at which development proceeds, in order that it not lead to excessive social disorder.

In short, the false public/private dualism of Patriarchal capitalism (a) creates the appearance of an adversarial conflict of interests between separate CIMBIs and a monolithic state; (b) entrenches a conflictual dog-eat-dog ethic and belief that one needs ever more power and wealth for security; and (c) obscures the shared interest in resource exploitation of the major actors of the corporatist system, labour unions, government and industry. If we want to begin to understand and resolve environmental problems, then we need a better descriptive model of the resource allocation system, one which clarifies the actual relationship between public and private sectors in decision making.

To this end, we now look at how androcentrism in Planning theory and practice (at the levels of Superstructure, Structure and Infrastructure) reinforce power relations in resource allocation and, ultimately, generate conflict. We begin by examining Planning at the Superstructure level, or the relation between Planning as an institution and the other major arenas for resource allocation: the legal, political and market systems.

## CHAPTER 4: SUPERSTRUCTURE OF PLANNING

### Introduction<sup>1</sup>

This chapter focuses on the level of decision-making structures and the structural relationships between the three major parties in Planning disputes: elected representatives, large development interests and public interest groups (in particular, greens). We consider the proposition introduced earlier that a growing fusion between public and private sector theory and practice on all levels belies the conventional idea that Planning stands in opposition to market forces. There is a trend towards collusive (corporatist) decision-making structures which is concealed by the public/private dichotomy of Patriarchy. Contrary to the myth that decision-making with regard to major resource allocation is either democratic and/or scientific in character, I suggest that the decision-making system can best be seen, for practical purposes, as power-based. This is evidenced by the fact that a decision-making structure and process has evolved which does not conform to the Constitution or blueprint for governance. We then consider the implications this has for environmental protection and, consequently, human well being.

The myth that Planning is separate from and opposed to development interests is a powerful one. It is so powerful, in fact, that although many greens and socialists accept the notion that there is a symbiotic relationship between the state and corporate capitalism, they still act on the faith that Planning - as presently conceived - can provide a counterbalance to the excesses and problems of capitalism. However, as Planning (in its current form) is a creature of capitalism, it is unlikely to represent a real threat to capitalist interests. As Bruyn and Meehan explain, Planning exists because capitalism lacks effective self-regulatory mechanisms. Government intervention is necessary because the capitalist system is not accountable to the environment, the local community or the public interest therein. The government must therefore remedy the many externalities and endemic conflicts generated by the capital accumulation process. The capitalist system:

... continues to be subject to mass unemployment, cycles of inflation and recession, labour-management conflict, environmental pollution, exploitation of consumers, corporate monopoly, runaway factories,

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<sup>1</sup> Chapters 4 and 5 are based on Janis Birkeland *Myths and Realities of Planning and Resource Allocation*, 1990 (Hobart: Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania). Some of this material was also presented at the Socialist Scholars Conference, Melbourne, July 18, 1991.

speculation, and corporate debt - all of which must be solved by the government.<sup>1</sup>

Government regulation is thus essential to the creation of a stable climate for business. It is not surprising, therefore, that while regulatory agencies are habitually blamed for - and may indeed cause - many economic problems, most regulatory agencies have been set up at the behest of industry groups to regulate competition (eg. Australian Wool Corporation, Apple Marketing board). That regulatory agencies evolve to serve the interests of regulated industries cannot be considered a radical observation any more.<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to speculate whether these agencies are currently facing 'extinction' because they have failed to adequately provide for public well being, or simply because they have outlived their usefulness to large corporations.

In the following, I review only some of the useful services that regulatory planning agencies provide to resource extraction, exploitation, and development industries. For specificity, I draw examples primarily from Tasmania. Though each jurisdiction varies somewhat in structure and history, my experience suggests that the patterns and principles discussed are fairly universal in Western capitalist society. We begin by considering the changing relationship of the state and private sector with regard to land use and environment planning and how this corresponds to the changing functions the Planning system bears in relation to resource-based industries.

### Planning in relation to industry

In theory, Parliament and/or Cabinet makes policy through the political process, while the administrative agencies of government serve only to put that policy into effect. Policy making is the prerogative of the legislative branch, which is democratically elected and accountable to the people. For both practical and political reasons, however, much decision-making power has been delegated to administrative agencies. Thus, many crucial governmental decisions which affect individual rights and the distribution of resources are made by unelected officials in bureaucracies. Government departments or statutory agencies have traditionally controlled and managed public resources such as public lands, forests, energy facilities, national parks and wildlife reserves. These statutory authorities were set up by legislation as independent agencies to be free of political influence (and to take the heat off politicians in controversial

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<sup>1</sup> Severyn T. Bruyn and James Meehan, 1987, *Beyond the Market and the State: New Directions in Community Development* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) at p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> J. K. Galbriath, 1983, *Economics and the Public Purpose* (London: Houghton Mifflin).

matters of public versus private activity). But of course, insulation from possible political interference also insulated agencies from political accountability.

In Tasmania, administrative agencies were effectively delegated complete authority over policy making and implementation within their domain, but they had particularly close historical ties with the state Premier's Office, rather than with Parliament. The state has always relied on primary industry for economic development, and the dominance of the Premier's Office in Tasmania is partly due to the growth of the statutory agencies concerned with resource exploitation. In turn, Premiers have depended to some extent on these agencies for political power. Thus, although theoretically answerable to Parliament, these bureaucracies were historically, for practical purposes, a law unto themselves.

The Hydro-Electric Commission ('Hydro') in Tasmania is a case in point. Its hegemony and its consequent freedom from public oversight was the fulcrum of environmental conflict in the 60s and 70s. So when the Labor Party of Doug Lowe came to power, it tried to institute administrative and bureaucratic reform. But even the government's attempt to bring the Hydro under direct ministerial control failed. When Andrew Lowry, Minister of Resources and Energy, was deposed, he complained he had been actively undermined and 'disinformed' by the Hydro.<sup>1</sup> Its power and influence was greatly curtailed in the 1980s as the direct result of environmental controversy (Appendix I), but old attitudes die hard. For example, in a time of severe cut backs to the public service budget in 1990, the Commission gave its management level significant raises, allegedly without even telling the Minister.

Such bureaucracies, via personal networks and by virtue of a monopoly on information, have also been able to undermine attempts at Planning reform. As a veteran Tasmanian planner recounted:

Both the state Strategy Plan and the state Planning Legislation of 1975 were largely undermined by the major state Departments and agencies. Whilst it is probably fair to say that these bodies were not sufficiently involved in the initiatives, it is equally not unfair to suggest that many found it difficult to move from the style of the 50's and 60's when, it is said, a small number of senior department heads lunched on most days at a respected gentleman's club and thereby governed Tasmania.<sup>2</sup>

Nonetheless, despite this comparative immunity from parliamentary influence, the bureaucracy had never been free of special interest group pressure. As indicated in the above quote, personal connections made it easy for special interests to 'capture' resource development

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<sup>1</sup> For insights into Tasmanian politics, two books by local politicians are available: Terry Aulich, 1992, *The River's End: A Political Thriller* (Balmain: Kerr Publishing); Douglas Ackley Lowe, 1984, *The Price of Power: The Politics behind the Tasmanian Dams Case* (Melbourne: MacMillan).

<sup>2</sup> Barry McNeill, 1988, "Commentary: State Planning and the Planning Profession", *Australian Planner* 26 (1) pp. 11-12 at p. 12.

agencies and Cabinets. In other words, the development sector learned to exploit this bureaucratic independence and hegemony to its own advantage. One benefit for business in developing close working relations with the regulatory planning agencies was that they avoided the expense of lobbying two or more political parties which periodically have new members voted in. Timber companies had only to persuade foresters in the Forestry Commission to allocate land for timber; concrete suppliers only had to persuade the Hydro-Electric Commission to build dams. And it was in the vested interests of these agencies to advocate such developments. These agencies did not have to justify developments proposals against competing uses for these resources in an open public forum.

Another advantage of this structure for development interests generally was the use of public investment capital for private development. During most of the twentieth century, functional planning and engineering for major projects such as urban redevelopment or provision of infrastructure (roads, hydro-electric schemes) was carried out by the public sector. This represented a major subsidy for the development interests that obtained the resource extraction, construction or supply contracts. Developers did not need to cover the up-front costs which would tie up expensive investment capital.

A third general advantage was bureaucratic secrecy, which worked to disempower the public. Before the advent of freedom of information legislation (adopted in Tasmania in 1992 8 years after it was introduced), administrative agencies were protected from public oversight. For example, the Tasmanian government and bureaucracy has withheld figures on public subsidies granted to large energy consumers and their energy consumption. (It could be discerned from annual reports, however, that 66.3 percent of hydro-electric power was consumed by 21 corporate users paying A\$177 million, while 33.4 percent was consumed by retail users paying A\$207 million [in 1990].<sup>1</sup>) Many of these large industries still do not meet the standards set in 1973 due to ministerial exemptions from the provisions of the Environment Protection Act (1973). Information on these industrial subsidies had been kept secret by successive Labor and Liberal governments (until the Field Labor Government [1989-91] released this data). To date, Freedom of Information legislation has not stopped bureaucratic secrecy.

The public has also been disempowered by the *dearth* of regulation, in at least two regards. First, Tasmanian legislation is mainly concerned with the nominal structures and powers of government. It specifies government functions, personnel and often clerical rules. But administration or the way of doing things has been delegated with no substantive or ethics-based guidelines. Policy and implementation are left to agencies or departments to work out in practice in conjunction with the industries that they regulate. Therefore they tend to adopt the

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<sup>1</sup> 1990 figures obtained from the research staff of the Green Independent's office.

goals, concepts, and methods of industry, rather than the community that the public servants (nominally) serve.

Second, and contrary to the norm in the U.S., the absence of legislated standards makes it difficult to challenge agency decisions. Generally, the validity of agency action can be challenged in court on grounds of being *ultra vires* (beyond the power) of the parent Act or the procedural requirements set down by the Act. But the enabling Acts which empower Tasmanian government agencies have not had policy statements or preambles to guide departmental actions or to measure the propriety of agency decisions.

Moreover, in Australia (unlike the U.S.) the validity of the primary legislation cannot easily be challenged. In Australia, according to custom, the government determines the legality of its own actions, because the majority in Parliament decides the scope of Judicial Review. Parliament can merely decide if it is in the public interest to confer on a Minister the power of legislating with immunity from challenge. Therefore, Parliament can exclude Judicial Review of agency action by simply declaring that, for example: 'regulations made under an Act shall have effect as if enacted in the parent Act'.

In the past then, and in Tasmania still, vast discretionary power was given to bureaucrats, and corporations were able to exploit this situation by capturing agencies. Because of the dualistic system of governance, efforts to reform the Planning system in Tasmania have always centred on two alternatives: more power on the part of Cabinet and/or more power on the part of statutory authorities or commissions. The choice was unchecked discretion on the part of either political or bureaucratic organizations, neither of which were designed for environmental problem solving (and, incidentally, were not part of the government apparatus set out in the Constitution<sup>1</sup>). This either/or approach to reform has greatly overlooked the fact that there has always been a symbiotic relationship between the Premier's Department and statutory authorities. Under the present order, whether it is the Premier's Department or statutory authorities that negotiate deals with powerful development interests behind closed doors is a rather moot point. Moreover, this debate is still occurring in Tasmania at a time when the influence of large corporations in the planning activities of government is growing alarmingly (Appendix 1). Tasmanians have therefore historically wrestled with a false choice which conceals the true nature of power relations in resource allocation.

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<sup>1</sup> The Cabinet and Premier are not specifically mentioned in the state Constitution. The Governor, as representative of the Queen (of England) cannot be held accountable, by legal convention, so he invites the leader of the party that has the majority in the House to form a government. The leader (who becomes the Premier) selects Ministers and gives them portfolios (responsibility for government departments) who together form the Cabinet. This system evolved since the Constitution was developed.

## Changing relationships

Power relationships between state and special interests have been changing on a global scale and at a remarkable pace. As corporate giants grow in size and power, their planning activities are increasingly less subject to either public scrutiny or consumer purchasing power. As already mentioned, they are increasingly independent of the market and political allocation systems. First, the corporate sector is no longer reliant on the market. The power of large corporations is such that they can determine costs and prices, and even persuade consumers how to think.<sup>1</sup> Through advertising, they can even change 'wants' into basic 'needs'. Second, the corporate sector is increasingly less subject to government control. Because large firms are able to integrate vertical functions, they can organize supply. Government agencies were once criticized for regarding business interests as 'clients'. Today, however, governments could be considered clients or 'markets' for private firms. In fact, some individual multi-national corporations are more powerful than some governments; private companies have been involved in *coup d'etats* and some have virtually formed alliances with foreign governments.<sup>2</sup>

With this increasing power, corporations have been able to 'capture' not only bureaucracies, but *elected governments*. Recent events in New Zealand provide a case in point. The New Zealand Labor Party raised NZ\$3.5 million to fund the 1987 election campaign from one dozen businessmen. The corporate elite donated to both parties as an investment in pro-business policies.<sup>3</sup> When a businessman donated NZ\$250,000 directly to the (then) Finance Minister, these funds went through a campaign committee. They should have gone through the Labor Party's regular accounting system, but the campaign committee withheld fundraising information from the party. After the election, NZ\$14 billion worth of public assets were sold off and many of these bonanzas went to the largest campaign contributors. For example, the above businessman's Corporation got N.Z. Steel.<sup>4</sup>

Moving from the particular to the general, the implications of corporate political influence for environmental destruction and militarism in the Third World are obvious and well

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<sup>1</sup> J. K. Galbriath, 1983, *above*.

<sup>2</sup> For an interesting, if not impartial, account of Big Business and the overthrow of the duly elected government in Chile, see F. Sergeyev, 1981, *Chile: CIA, Big Business*, trans by Bev Bobrow (Moscow: Progress Publishers); Anthony Sampson, 1973, *The Sovereign State of ITT* (NY: Stein and Day).

<sup>3</sup> The ABC T.V. investigative series "4 Corners" has documented examples of this in Australia and New Zealand. The example in the text was presented on "Frontline" New Zealand TV (May 1990).

<sup>4</sup> "4 Corners", *above*.

documented.<sup>1</sup> But unchecked corporate decision making adversely affects the environment in the First World, even in the absence of corruption. To take one example, chemical manufacturers argue that consumers demand products that involve risks: "to have jobs you gotta have pollution". But as John O'Connor asks:

...whoever demanded polyvinyl chloride, DDT, dioxin, synthetic clothes, flammable textiles, and toxic building materials? Rather than "market demand", it is the chemical industry itself that has carefully shaped consumer demand by producing large volumes of toxic materials to replace natural-based products and advertising them to the American public. This major shift in production has been based not on what is necessarily needed by society but on the chemical industry's financial self-interest.<sup>2</sup>

What is the result of the growth in corporate power in relation to decision-making structures in Planning? While business interests have historically enjoyed close working relations with state-owned enterprises and agencies, they are now increasingly bypassing the bureaucracy. This is partly because governments are less able to provide the infrastructure to encourage new development. In some cases, however, the corporate sector is *choosing* to internalize planning and development costs. At the same time, public interest groups are gradually learning to skip the bureaucracy *and* politicians and are beginning to deal directly with industry. Past relationships are thus completely in flux.

But if corporations are so powerful, why would the private sector abandon the previous cosy relationship with the bureaucracy, and the development subsidies it produced? The answer lies in changing conditions and power relationships. First, corporations are finding the bureaucracy less useful as gatekeepers. This is because public interest groups have increasingly made inroads into the bureaucratic labyrinth. Through advocacy, participation, mediation schemes and mechanisms such as the environmental impact assessment (EIA), concerned citizens have increasingly been able to challenge bureaucratic power. Environmentalists and sympathizers in bureaucracies have influenced their associates and leaked information back to activists or sympathetic politicians. In Tasmania, documents fall off the back of trucks with remarkable reliability.<sup>3</sup> Also, the elected government and bureaucracy are increasingly subject to public exposure and hence voter disapproval, especially

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, Irene Dankelman and Joan Davidson, 1988, *Women and Environment in the Third World: Alliance for the Future* (London: Earthscan Publications); John W. Warnock, 1989, *The Politics of Hunger* (NY: Methuen); Susan George, 1989, *A Fate Worse than Debt* (London: Pelican).

<sup>2</sup> John O'Connor, 1990, "The Toxics Crisis", in Gary Cohen and John O'Connor, eds., *Fighting Toxics* (Washington D.C.: Island Press) pp. 11-24 at p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> But see Isla MacGregor, 1993, "User(p) Friendly Science?", *Chain Reaction* 68, pp. 34-37, who suggests that it is difficult to get adequate cooperation from sources, due to intellectual suppression.



through the international trend toward 'whistle-blowing'.<sup>1</sup> In sum, the public is gaining influence in the bureaucracy through improved decision-making processes and community access.

A second reason that corporations are bypassing the bureaucracy is that, to avoid planning processes and approvals, corporations have learned to deal directly with cabinets, premiers and prime ministers (Appendix 1). As the (then) state Premier Robin Gray wrote:

Tasmania has in place mechanisms for conflict resolution in land use issues. At the *technical* level, the Town and Country Planning Commission has the responsibility of providing advice to Government. state Cabinet has the ultimate responsibility of conflict resolution at the *political* level.<sup>2</sup> (*italics added*)

The advantage of this arrangement is that these government 'executives' are generally less subject to checks, balances and public oversight than modern bureaucracies and legislatures. I suggest that there is, consequently, a growing fusion between government and resource-extractive industries with regard to both the form and substance of decision making.

A recent example of how the system has changed is given below (taken from the local newspaper, the Launceston Examiner, 5 March 1993). It reveals the response of the state Premier and Cabinet to pressure from a large aluminum smelter, Comalco, which is threatening to leave Tasmania if it does not get guaranteed cheap electricity.

The state Government will force the Hydro-Electric Commission to sell part of its power generation system to Comalco. The Premier, Mr. Groom, admitted the HEC was opposed to selling part of the grid, but its concerns were being overridden.

"The HEC is owned by Tasmanians so, in effect, the controlling shareholder is the state Government on behalf of Tasmania," he said. "That means that those policy initiatives which my Government believes are necessary to successfully conclude the Comalco negotiations ultimately have to be implemented by the HEC".

The Announcement was made without the knowledge of the Energy Minister, Mr. Gray, sparking the possibility of Government infighting. The Opposition has condemned the move to sell a power generation system ... as a "sell-out".

"It is a public asset and if the Government was going to sell it off then surely it should go to the highest bidder", Dr. Amos, the Opposition's energy spokesman, said.

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<sup>1</sup> See generally Brian Martin, C.M. Ann Baker, Clyde Manwell and Cedric Pugh, 1986, *Intellectual Suppression: Australian Case Histories, Analysis and Responses* (NSW: Angus and Robertson).

<sup>2</sup> Robin Gray, 1988, "Resource Harvesting and Conservation: The State Government View", *Australian Planner* 26 (1) at p. 5.

## The new corporatism

The disempowerment of public interest groups can only generate conflict in the long term. As the case history illustrates (Appendix 1), when there are no appropriate formal channels, greens have had no option but to take to the streets, forests, skies and rivers. This 'direct action' has raised the level of controversy such that elected governments now need to distance themselves from environmental decisions which will invariably anger both development and conservation interests. Consequently, there has been a trend toward including environmental groups in negotiation and mediation processes.<sup>1</sup> Major environmental and land use policies and decisions are occurring less through formal adjudicatory planning processes (they were never fully developed in Tasmania anyway), and increasingly through new 'conflict resolution' mechanisms (as exemplified by the Tasmanian Forestry negotiations in Appendix 1). Adjudicatory processes refer to a system where decisions are made in a 'judicious' manner (if not in substance), according to a structure designed to prevent the abuse of power. In contrast, corporatist processes, again, are where resources are allocated through negotiated arrangements between the government and special interests.

All that is really new about the much acclaimed environmental conflict resolution process is the inclusion of environmental representatives into the corporatist negotiation structures that previously were monopolized by industry and unions. But what are the broader implications of this present trend? On the one hand, it has been met with enthusiasm by some environmentalists because of the initial positive results, especially with regard to access to information. While corporatism has sometimes meant a few short-term concessions to environmental interests, however, the long-term implications are quite problematic. This is because negotiation - when removed from a broader adjudicatory framework - is a power-based decision-making system and, therefore, the results depend on the relative power of the parties. In a power-based system, development interests have that power; greens ultimately can only lose. Let us look at some reasons.

First, corporatism means 'cooptation', or buying off green campaigners by giving them a stake in a power structure. (Many former 'greenies' now hold positions in the federal government.) Also, the 'spokesmen' of environment groups tend to be those most able to speak the Patriarchal and technocratic language of their opponents (rather than representing the

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<sup>1</sup> The literature on corporatism has largely ignored environmental issues and therefore no references can be suggested in this area. However, further reading with regard to corporatism in general include: Alan Cawson, 1986, *Corporatism and Political Theory* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell); Wyn Grant, ed., 1985, *The Political Economy of Corporatism* (London: MacMillan); Reginald Harrison, 1980, *Pluralism and Corporatism: The Political Evolution of Modern Democracies* (London: Allen and Unwin); Gerhard Lehmbruch and Phillippe C. Schmitter, eds, 1982, *Patterns of Corporatist Policy Making* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications); Otto Newman, 1981, *The challenge of Corporatism* (London: The MacMillan Press).

new paradigm). Further, those who select themselves, or are selected by their peers, to hold positions at the bargaining table will sometimes be those who see the movement as a power base. Therefore, the negotiation framework will tend to empower those who share the same Patriarchal values as those in the development sector.

Second, a 'round' table does not signify a change in the shape of power relations that operate under the table. In an adjudicatory decision-making process, decisions are weighed against a set of principles, objectives, or standards. Therefore, a departure from them is an early warning system of Corruption, so public support can be mustered for change, or at least the situation may be exposed. In mediation or negotiation, in contrast, the stakeholders determine the ground rules and objectives. Each party claims to represent the public interest. The hidden premises of negotiation are therefore that a compromise is optimal or that the 'problem' is merely the conflict itself.

Negotiation on environmental issues is, therefore, only appropriate in the context of adjudicatory decision-making structures. Negotiation processes cannot stand alone, because win-win solutions are generally only possible at the margins. People can negotiate over secondary issues but not over fundamental ones, such as whether to build a dam or clearfell a forest. At best, then, negotiation means compromise: the trade offs that result are really business as usual - balancing off more of the public estate each year. Yet, given the state of the environment, preservation may be the appropriate 'balance' between conservation and development (rather than a percentage of each).

Third, terms like negotiation, participation or conflict resolution are sometimes used in an Orwellian or manipulative way. Let us take an example from Tasmania. Here a Council composed of representatives of industry and environmental groups set up a joint problem-solving process to recommend a strategy for the future of Tasmania's forests. The greens only participated on condition that decisions would be by consensus only. A year later, however, proposals for 'resource security' legislation (to 'protect' forests from preservation) were adopted by a majority vote by the Council. This was totally unacceptable to the greens. The greens then had a choice to walk out or stay but be nonetheless accused of walking out anyway. Resource security legislation was designed to pre-empt public debate with another political *fait accompli* (a tradition in Tasmania). But the fact that such terms as 'conflict resolution', 'mediation' and 'participation' were used is perhaps why about 70 percent of one thousand Tasmanians polled at the time overwhelmingly supported resource security legislation, despite the fact that information about what it would mean in fact was not yet even available.<sup>1</sup> After all, what could be more reasonable than a (widely publicized) 'conflict

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<sup>1</sup> Poll conducted by the "7:30 Report", Australian Broadcasting Commission TV (1992).

resolution' process, especially if greens were a part of that process and only "stormed out when they couldn't get their way".

A final problem with corporatist decision making with regard to the environment is that the game is largely controlled by the corporate sector. They can decide the parameters of what is bargained over and select certain interests for negotiation and consultation and withhold others or 'stack the deck'. For example, it is a common ploy to present the spectre of, say, two large pulp mills - in order to negotiate one small one. John Sillince tells of a plan for a 'nuclear island' of nine nuclear plants at Oxford Ness. When the debate about the nearby Sizewell B plant began, residents were told that the 'nuclear island' idea would be dropped if Sizewell B was successful.<sup>1</sup> If all else fails, retrenchments are easily arranged at strategically appropriate times. This scares the local population and deflates grass roots support for the negotiators.

## Conclusions

In summary then, as a result of these changing strategical and power relationships, it appears that large resource development interests do not benefit as much from reciprocal relationships with functional and resource management bureaucracies as before. Consequently, bureaucracies are being disempowered and new structural arrangements for resource allocation are developing which sometimes see unions, business, and environmental leaders around the same bargaining table. (Currently, however, the once influential Australian and New Zealand union movements appear also to be undergoing a process of de-corporatization). Paradoxically, however, the decision-making system is unchanged. Decisions are still an outcome of power relations operating under the table.

In Tasmania, resource allocation remains in substance a matter of power politics. The major resource allocation decisions occur largely through personal and political influence in an autocratic, Patriarchal enclave, free of countervailing viewpoints and values. Large producers and development interests still work intimately with both Cabinet and statutory authorities behind closed doors in a tripartite 'old boys club'. The institutions through which resources are allocated in Tasmania (cabinet, statutory authorities and national and transnational corporations) are not in the Constitution, which is the basic framework for government decision-making. The people did not actually choose this system of governance or resource allocation.

Thus, it could be argued that Tasmania does not have a 'constitutional' form of government vis-a-vis environmental decision-making. In fact, most people do not even know what corporatism is.<sup>2</sup> In Tasmania, it is particularly ironic that this unwritten, unplanned,

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<sup>1</sup> John Sillince, 1986, *A Theory of Planning* (Aldershot: Gower) at p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> See references on corporatism provided above.

institutional system for resource allocation is considered unchangeable, as if chiselled in stone. This executive-style decision making has even found support among conservative environmentalists as well:

My opinion is that the elected government should manage public resources, not the Parliament. This is the tradition upon which parliaments in Australia have operated with respect to the use of Crown or public resources ever since government was first established here.<sup>1</sup>

But there is nothing sacrosanct about the corporatist decision-making system. It evolved not through design or consensus, but as a side effect of power relationships between corporate interests, the Cabinet and bureaucracy.

Moreover, the decision-making framework and processes of Cabinet, statutory authorities and private corporations were not designed for dealing with environmental issues. The environmental crisis is still not 'on the agenda'. Tasmanian governments are still not interested in resolving the *causes* of environmental conflict. They are just forestalling or manipulating that conflict in a desperate bid for political survival, as large corporations strengthen their stranglehold on public resources.

Of course, this crisis of legitimacy could easily be resolved by governments. When Parliament delegates authority to an agency it could provide safeguards to discipline the decision-making processes and ensure appropriate factors and considerations are taken into account. Although Cabinet's power in Tasmania is virtually unchecked, it could, for example, choose to exercise 'self-government' and limit its own behaviour by a constitution of Ethical principles. This would help to avoid extra-political influences in that decisions could be evaluated against standards by the citizenry. This is the least we should be able to expect.

### **An ecofeminist resource allocation model**

In Chapter 3, we saw that, as a descriptive model, the public/private dichotomy is a dangerously misleading one because it obfuscates the fundamental conflict between private and public interests and represents these two interests as being catered to by separate institutions. In the present chapter we have seen that business and public decision-making structures are becoming as one through, for example, the cooptation of public interest groups into corporatist arrangements. Such new structures might be desirable if power relations in resource allocation were in fact pluralist but, as we saw in Chapter 2, they are not. Thus, the public interest in sustainability is under represented in the present system of governance.

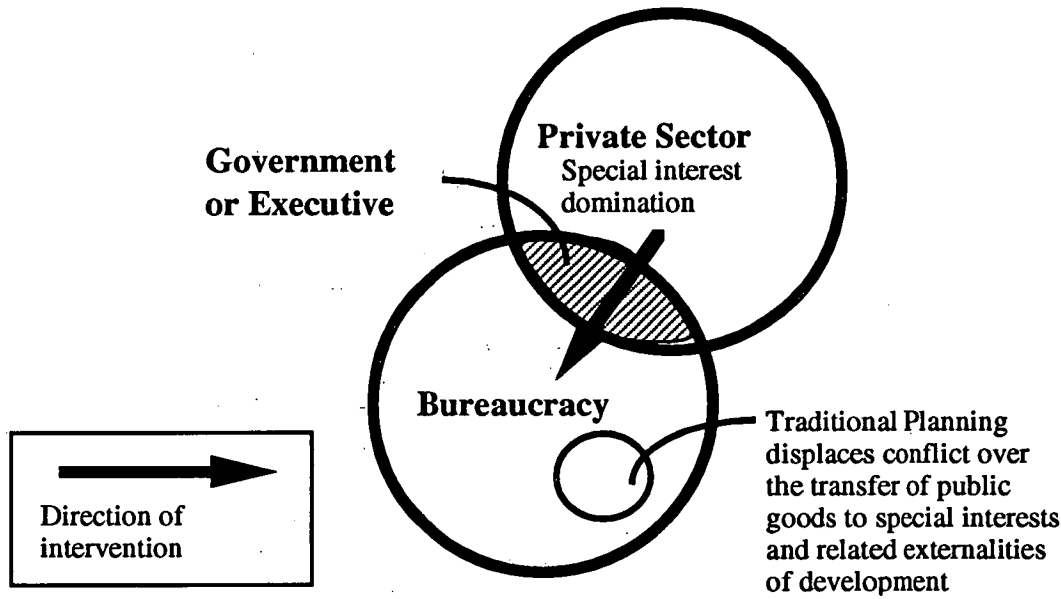
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<sup>1</sup> Green Independents' spokesperson on planning issues, Gerry Bates, MHA, writing in the Green Independents' Newsletter, 1991, "Government Should Manage Resources" *The Daily Planet* 15, at p. 13.

**Descriptive model**

Having previously described the problems concealed by the traditional descriptive and normative models of resource allocation, which are virtually one and the same, we now consider what an ecofeminist paradigm would suggest in the way of descriptive and prescriptive resource allocation models. The descriptive model simply diagrams what has been argued thus far in Part II.

**Figure 3: New (descriptive) resource allocation model**



In this new model, structural relationships between the private and public sectors are indicative of power relations, rather than being based upon where the decisions are formally made. The private sector indirectly dictates government policies which are carried out by the bureaucracy. Public interest groups are not represented by this ecofeminist model because they do not presently have an arena where their participation is meaningful. Though they are skilful at obtaining media coverage, this arena does not lend itself to the in-depth Ethical discourse that environmental issues require.

This new descriptive model eliminates the false public/private dichotomy altogether. However, it should be emphasized that the public/private distinction is important to retain in analysis. The dichotomy between public and private allocative mechanisms, though false in descriptive terms, remains an important analytical concept, due to the important difference between individual short-term, immediate interests and the long term, diffuse public impacts of such decisions.

## Normative model

In the remainder of this chapter, I propose a new model which attempts to correct for the problems which, I have suggested, are inherent in a power-based, and dualistic/hierarchical, resource allocation system. The idea of an ecofeminist structure of governance seems a contradiction in terms as ecofeminists, along with many other radical greens, advocate something along the lines of an 'anarchical socialist' end state. Greens generally oppose centralized forms of government, visualizing instead a society composed of decentralized confederations of (relatively) self-sufficient and autonomous communities, paralleling ecosystems in diversity and complexity.

Before taking up the issue of whether a state structure is consistent with a radical green position, there is another point raised. Are decentralized communities ecologically-sound, given current population levels? Perhaps urban consolidation is better, in view of the insurmountable environmental impact of a large population on the rural ecology, regardless of life style. Also, the apparent preference of the majority for city living should not be disregarded. The comparison would involve complex issues, and alternatives cannot be adequately measured and compared, because so much would depend on *how* the urban areas were modified. Certainly, past forms of urban redevelopment have been dramatically unsuccessful, but these projects were approached through a social engineering framework. Nonetheless, it is remarkable that planners have not really addressed such a crucial issue as whether to consolidate or decentralize. For example, in Australia, the push for regional development in the 1970s was accompanied by little, if any, analysis of the comparative ecological impacts of geographical decentralization and consolidation.

But in this project, we are concerned with the structure of decision making, rather than the substance. Decentralization (and/or bioregionalism<sup>1</sup>) is a frequent platform of green policy, because, among other things: (a) it (arguably) minimizes environmental impacts, (b) participatory democracies and self-governing communities are more stable and socially fulfilling, (c) the integration of small-scale and diversified forms of industry and agriculture reduce transport and thus energy consumption, and (d) human scale favours personal relationships and sense of identity, while large centralist structures tend toward alienation and excessive individualism.<sup>2</sup> The underlying assumption behind geographical decentralization, however, is that it would, in itself, bring about social transformation. For example, Rudolf

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<sup>1</sup> A bioregion is a community boundary determined by natural landforms, watersheds, or ecosystems. The idea of bioregionalism is that political and social arrangements are designed upon the principles of natural ecosystems and life styles, and are centred on the natural region. See generally Van Andruss, Christopher Plant, Judith Plant, and Eleanor Wright, eds., *Home! A Bioregional Reader* (PA: New Society).

<sup>2</sup> Edward Goldsmith and editorial staff of *The Ecologist*, 1972, *A Blueprint for Survival* (Harmondsworth: Penguin) at p. 52-3.

Bahro's proposed (Benedictine-style) communes appears to be premised on this conviction.<sup>1</sup>

In a similar vein, Ted Trainer suggests that geographical decentralization

would force people together, it would require then to co-operate on important common goals, to share, to get to know each other, to depend on and to help each other and therefore to build the social relations that are so impoverished in affluent society.<sup>2</sup>

This sort of 'physical determinism' has been discredited in Planning circles for some decades. But even assuming that decentralized social organization leads to personal transformation, the preliminary issue is how to bring about a bioregional social order in the first place. Ecosocialists generally believe that this would require state involvement. According to Martin Ryle, for example, an ecosocialist transformation "implies the necessity of replacing the current, highly centralized institutions of capitalist finance and production, and here the state must play an active role also".<sup>3</sup> Similarly, André Gorz has argued that a central state is necessary to the realization of a green society.<sup>4</sup> Ecofeminists have less faith in the capacity and autonomy of a state which is 'manned' by those imbued in Patriarchal consciousness, under the *de facto* control of production interests, and - at the best of times - subject to systematically misinformed and manipulated voters.<sup>5</sup> In a Patriarchal social order, a decentralized system would result in *Lord of the Flies* syndrome (authoritarianism) before the presumed magical properties of communal living took effect. Of course, bioregional experiments are a step in the right direction by setting an example.<sup>6</sup> It is my position, however, that social transformation requires a dialectic between personal and institutional transformation. Therefore, as I argue later, transitional structures are therefore necessary. Therefore, we now explore what a prescriptive model might look like.

## Typology

In this typology, natural goods or 'resources' are allocated by four distinct but overlapping decision-making arenas - the political, market, legal and Planning institutions. There are at least two different conceptual bases for structuring the relationship between these arenas in a resource allocation model. The ideological model, as we saw, places primary emphasis upon

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<sup>1</sup> See Murray Bookchin, 1990, "Municipal Libertarianism", in Van Andrus, *et. al.*, above pp. 145-146; Rudolf Bahro, 1986, *Building the Green Movement* (London: GMP) pp. 187-189.

<sup>2</sup> Ted Trainer, 1985, *Abandon Affluence!* (London: Zed Books) at p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> Martin Ryle, 1988, *Ecology and Socialism* (London: Century Hutchinson) at p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> See generally André Gorz, 1980, *Ecology as Politics* (London: Pluto Press).

<sup>5</sup> Similarly, social Ecologist Murray Bookchin's 'municipal libertarianism' suggests *political* decentralization as a means to social change.

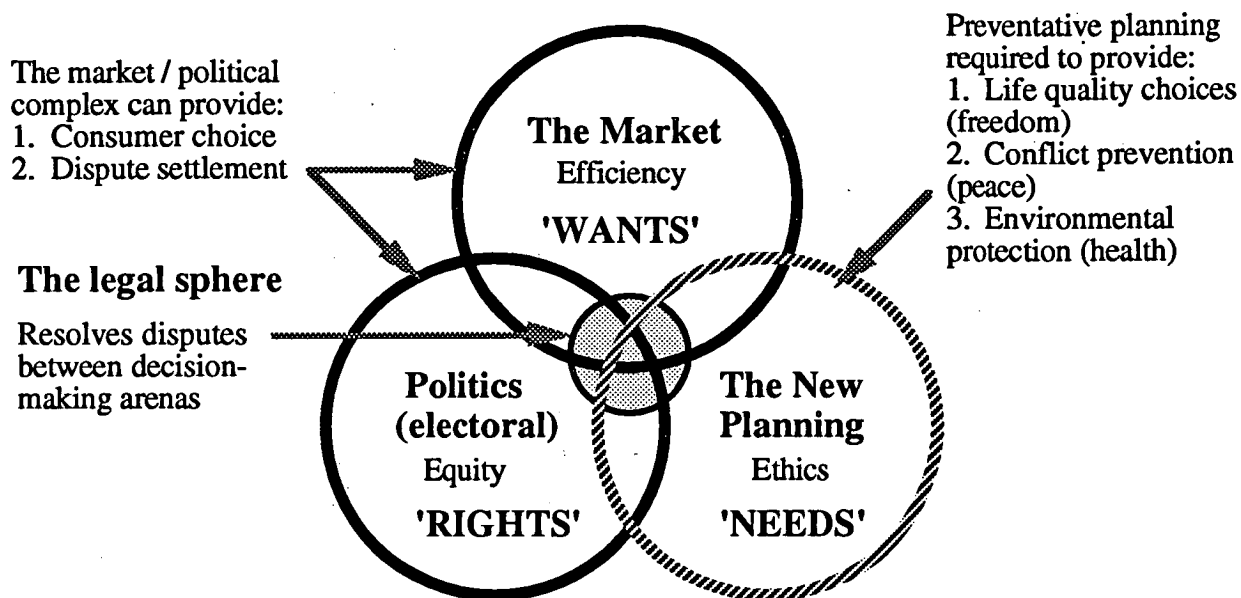
<sup>6</sup> From my communications with people who have lived in such communities, it would appear that the problem of personal relationships has been significant if not central to their failure.



whether the allocation is conducted in the public or private *sector*, rather than upon their function. The proposed model, in contrast, makes a fundamental distinction between the three decision-making arenas for resource allocation based on their *function* in meeting different interests: specifically (a) rights/responsibilities (b) wants and (c) needs (including emotional needs). Thus it is based not on who (officially) decides and where decision making (officially) occurs, but on what is decided and how it is decided. The resource allocation arenas would be reconstructed so as to better provide for fundamental human *rights*, *wants* and *needs* respectively. This creates a tri-partite model with clear responsibilities and powers, as opposed to the existing dualistic one (Figure 4).

This is much like the arrangement between the judicial, executive, and legislative, division of functions in the American and Australian Constitutions which were designed to create 'checks and balances'. It might have succeeded (were all other things equal) had the third dimension been taken into account. Over time, the system was corrupted, because governments initially encouraged, even subsidized, the exploitation of land and natural resources as 'free goods'. This policy gave de facto control over public goods to private parties which were able to become powerful resource extraction and development interests. As a function of size and power, these interests then subverted the system of checks and balances set up in the Constitution. The fact that the third dimension was not considered led to the failure of a system of governance which was designed to balance power relations between the individual and society.

**Figure 4: Proposed (normative) resource allocation model**



The proposed model assumes the state will not 'wither away', but it could be considered as a transitional state. Although the conceptual change is radical, the structural change is minor. At present, the nature of the decision-making systems (democracy, market, and planning) correspond *logically* - but not in practice - with rights, wants, and needs, respectively.

### Political sphere

The political sphere is logically that which regulates or structures human *rights* and relationships. In Western representative democracies, the institutions of government were expressly designed for the purpose of safeguarding rights and ensuring distributive justice or equity (among elites, at least, in the first instance). Via the political process, elected representatives, in theory, resolve conflicts over competing claims to natural and social resources by constituent interest groups. One problem is that the political system has not been participatory in a meaningful or substantive sense. However, due to problems of scale, some degree of representative or delegated decision making is probably required in any 'participatory' decision-making system.

Another problem, of course, has been that some 'interests' are more politically influential than others. Yet, although the political system has been corrupted, the system of representative democracy *does* provide a forum for the protection of basic rights. The main problem is that representative democracy cannot work for resolving environmental planning issues (as, again, these are Ethical in nature, not distributive). Such issues cannot be resolved in a power-based system where vested interests and the existing distribution of wealth is built into the decision-making process.

## Market sphere

The market sphere, or the exchange sector, is designed logically to meet consumers' demands or human *wants*. The market theoretically resolves conflicts over private goods and services through an informal bargaining and exchange process. Its function is to provide for goods and services by facilitating efficient material exchanges. It has failed, however, with regard to ecological efficiency. The market may be efficient in terms of price, but it is often inefficient in terms of materials or energy use. This is because the market is designed only to allocate private resources. It is not designed to provide public or environmental goods, such as rivers, forests or art museums. In fact (as environmentalists have complained for decades), economics treats environmental goods - the very basis of the entire economy - as if they were free.

Another problem already discussed is that powerful individuals, corporations, and oligopolies have acquired sufficient power to control both supply and demand. Thus, this system too has been corrupted by power relations. It can nonetheless be argued that the market is better at satisfying material wants (as opposed to needs) than is state Planning. This is debatable, however, as capitalist producers create unnecessary and insatiable wants, and non-Patriarchal state Planning has never been tried. In the new system, basic investment decisions would be determined in the Planning sphere, but the market would operate to provide flexibility, diversity, and price control.

Finally, the market does not work for providing basic *needs*, such as ecological sustainability. It is important to clarify what is meant by 'needs'. In Patriarchal ideology, the reality of non-material needs are denied or ignored. This is a major reason why Patriarchal Planning causes such major social disruption. The model therefore assumes an ecological perspective which holds human 'needs' to necessarily include preserving the integrity of natural ecosystems and other life forms, and involve the emotional (and psychic) as well as rational self (which is divided in Western Patriarchy). Otherwise, the proposed model would not be relevant to environmental protection and human survival in the long term.

## Legal sphere

A third arena, the legal system, is not presently designed to address environmental issues either, as much of its basic concepts and procedures derive from property rights, rather than public interests. The law is also being colonized by concepts from the economic sphere (below). However, it is nonetheless tailored to resolve disputes which result from jurisdictional conflicts, and thus could sort out similar territorial issues involving the other resource allocation arenas (market, political and Planning). It can be the final arbiter of disputes over interpretations of the new Constitutional framework, a present function of the legal system.

As it now stands, the political, legal, and market spheres do not achieve the ideal functions of protecting and providing for the rights and wants of all, let alone basic needs. This is because, as we have seen: (a) they reflect the *power-based* social system in which they operate; (b) the consequent rise of large-scale corporate and military power was not anticipated when Western democracies were first envisaged and instituted; (c) the paradigms upon which those economic, legal, and political theories were based were not designed to deal with ecological issues.

### Planning sphere

It is the fourth allocative arena that concerns us in this work, however. In the next chapter, we look at why we need Planning in the first place, and consider in more detail why it should be a separate sphere, of at least equal importance to the market and political spheres (as represented by the proposed normative model).<sup>1</sup> The change needed is so fundamental that Planning cannot be adequately restructured unless it is instituted as a third distinct decision-making sphere. We then examine why the Planning system, as presently designed, militates against peace, social justice, and environmental preservation - the prerequisites of sustainability.

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<sup>1</sup> John S. Dryzek has also proposed a new decision-making sphere. His is based on Habermas's idea of an 'ideal speech' situation or 'communicative rationality' wherein individuals can operate under conditions free from domination, deception, self-deception and strategizing. My position is that to create this setting we must address androcentrism and gender-blindness, which are key factors in the above conditions. See John S. Dryzek, 1990, "Designs for Environmental Discourse: The Greening of the Administrative State", in R. Paehlke and D. Jorgenson, eds., *Environmental Politics and the Administrative State* (Ontario: Broadview Press) pp. 97-111. See also John Forester, 1989, *above* ; Jürgen Habermas, 1984, *The Theory of Communicative Action* , Vol. 1, *Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Boston: Beacon Press).

## CHAPTER 5: STRUCTURE OF PLANNING

This chapter concerns Planning as an institution (Structure level). We first discuss the need for planning. The existing Planning system, however, encourages the abuse of power because it facilitates the conversion of natural resources to private interests. Planning, as presently designed, contributes to the economic and ethical deficiencies of the Allocation system, and exacerbates the environmental problems and social conflict which justify its existence in the first place. I argue that simply more Planning, or a Planning system with more centrality along the lines of socialist reforms is not the answer. A total rethink is necessary, not just of the system of governance and the place of Planning within it, but of the Planning system itself. Let us begin with a review of the standard reasons usually presented for and against Planning, for the benefit of lay readers.

### Reasons for Planning

Planning texts often begin with a (seemingly mandatory) justification for having any Planning at all - as if Planning were in conflict with democracy. If we accept the main premise of market capitalism, then Planning is at best unnecessary. That premise, of course, is that the independent activities of individual consumers and producers, making decisions in their own self-interest, will result in the greatest common good in the long term. As often pointed out, the market system is supported by the fiction that buyers have complete knowledge, because to pursue their self-interest they must know what their self-interest is and what their alternatives are. The same assumption holds for voting systems. If this fiction held true, then illegal or deceptive business practices would automatically be forced out of the market. But this is not the case.

In a capitalist economy, state Planning functions are theoretically limited to those things the market cannot do. One of these is referred to as 'market failure', which occurs in the case of public goods, natural monopolies and external diseconomies. Another deficiency of the market is that it does not always allocate land and resources efficiently in terms of public costs and benefits and therefore tends toward the polarization of rich and poor. Finally, the market cannot develop and implement long-term social policy objects that require planning and coordination. As mentioned earlier, 'production anarchy' leads to waste, instability, and conflict through cyclical overproduction and unemployment - even though centrally planned economies may be even less successful in this regard. (Of course, the New Right contests these traditional arguments for Planning.) Let us review some of the arguments for Planning.

## Market failure

### Public goods

The price system is an efficient means of rationing many types of goods and services. Land and resources are a special case, however. Individuals and firms do not always use land and resources to their most profitable end, or in a manner that furthers the public interest over the long term. Land and natural resources are subject to the principles that apply to public or collective goods. Public goods are goods and services that cannot be provided through the market because they are necessarily provided to groups. This means that individuals who will not pay cannot be prevented from using them. For example, those who pay no tax will nonetheless receive the benefits of national defence, just as taxpayers 'pay' for weapons whether they vote for increased defence or not. They cannot be excluded from either the benefit or burden of military expenditures.

In the case of complete market failure, there is a need for the direct *provision* of goods and services by the public sector. Such goods include foreign aid, wildlife preservation, public facilities, flood control, disaster relief, police, military, fire protection and 'pure' research. Problems have often resulted from the fact that the government generally does not pay or charge the true market value for land, resources, and other public goods. Examples are royalties for public timber and compulsory conscription. Cost-benefit analyses pertaining to public resources and military expenditures have tended to undervalue the resources, whether human or natural. Thus, the true social cost of resource exploitation and militarism are hidden from consumers and voters.

Where there is partial market failure, some form of *regulation* is required, as in the case of monopolies and pollution control. Public services that are not profitable often need to be provided by the public sector. For example, although the use of theatres, museums, parks and nature preserves can be withheld by tolls and user fees, they will not generally be provided by the private sector. Public goods such as cultural facilities, natural amenities and welfare standards, benefit society in general even though many individuals may not make direct use of them. To illustrate, open space in urban areas has the characteristic of a public good because if a private developer provides it, the benefits accrue to competitors. Because adjacent development will have more light, air and aesthetic quality, clients may be drawn by the amenities provided by business competitors. Therefore, regulation is generally necessary to provide benefits like open space and environmental amenity.

## Externalities

Another type of market failure is that of external economies. Externalities occur where a private activity creates social costs. For example, externalities created by cars is estimated to cost the United States' public US\$300 billion a year.<sup>1</sup> Where an industry pollutes a river or depletes the timber resource, the value of that river or forest is reduced for other purposes, and public health costs may be inflicted upon third parties. Public costs are not paid for by the company in the absence of government intervention to, for example, require the installation of pollution control or clean up measures. According to the United States Environmental Protection authority, for example, water pollution externalities cost US\$10 billion a year excluding the costs of hazardous chemical wastes.<sup>2</sup> Consumers can theoretically influence corporate behaviour through boycotts or simply through buying green products, but they will not have the information to do so in the absence of government action. For example, irradiated and genetically-altered food products are generally not required to be labelled as such, so consumers cannot 'vote with their pocketbook'.

With regard to externalities, government regulation often assists developers as much as the general public. For example, acting separately, developers cannot afford to devote valuable floor area to public uses, such as day care centres, libraries or galleries, given the cost of land in densely developed urban areas. Yet the competition for marketable office space can result in social costs such as congestion and health problems (eg. micro-climatic effects like wind tunnels and heat banks) which can reduce the commercial value of their developments. The abandonment of inner city shopping areas for regional shopping malls is partially a reflection of this development anarchy. By regulating to prevent unjust externalities, inner city developments may remain commercially viable.

Some decision-making system is necessary to internalize the private costs of development. Whether the devices used are market-based, Ethics-based, or command forms of regulation, the research precedent to deciding what forms of regulation are appropriate must be done by planners (by whatever name). Someone must explain the potential ramifications of such policy decisions on the environment and society to inform (lay or expert) decision makers. If producers and/or consumers are to make collective decisions, planners are necessary to mediate this process.

## Monopolies

The market tends toward monopoly as firms and individuals attempt to control resources and maximize profit. Thus, antitrust laws are to preserve, not restrict, the free market. Natural

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Ekins, Mayer Hillman, and Robert Hutchinson, 1992, *above* at p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Green and John F. Berry, 1985, "Corporate Crime", *The Nation* June 8th and 15th.

monopolies occur where a major facility or infrastructure is required such that one producer controls the market. An example is hydro-electric power. In these cases, there are economies of scale in having only one producer. However, a private producer will tend to lower output and increase prices for greater profit and thus become inefficient. So will a public authority for that matter. A monopoly can be state-operated, or privately-operated with state regulation. In either case, however, a public utility (where people can buy stocks in the monopoly) is often managed in terms of economic efficiency only. As the stockholders are concerned with profit maximization, public utilities have not proven a terribly effective form of control.

In sum, there are two basic approaches to dealing with the problems related to externalities, public goods and monopolies: direct government operation or government regulation. In a market-oriented system, direct government operation is generally disfavoured on the presumption that the bureaucracy is less efficient than the corpocracy. The alternative, regulation, generates its own set of public relations problems. Most obvious, of course, is that people do not like being on the receiving end of a regulatory relationship. Also, bribery and kick-backs often accompany this relationship, although this occurs in purely private sector activity as well). The externalities are rarely considered in the decision-making process whether by corporate managers, stockholders, or government regulators.

The New Right, of course, argues for deregulation and privatization on the grounds that the private sector can prevent or manage the problems of public goods, monopolies and externalities. This position has become extremely influential since the late 1970s, partly through the work of New Right think tanks. In Australia, these include the Institute of Public Affairs, the Tasman Institute, the Sydney Institute and the Centre for Independent Studies. These think tanks operate under the pretence of political independence, but are largely funded and answerable to resource development interests.<sup>1</sup>

An example of problems created by deregulation is provided by the recent scandal concerning private psychiatric hospitals in the United States (particularly National Medical Enterprises and its subsidiary, the Psychiatric Institute of America). Many of these hospitals were spawned in the 1980s by the deregulation of health care, and it has been estimated that mental health fraud now costs U.S. taxpayers US\$5 billion dollars a year.<sup>2</sup> There have been cases of people without psychiatric problems being 'kidnapped' and detained against their will until their medical insurance ran out. Medical practitioners were paid to submit people to these institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> "7.30 Report", Australian Broadcasting Commission TV, October 5, 1992.

<sup>2</sup> "4 Corners", Australian Broadcasting Commission TV, October 16, 1991.



The corpocracy, then, is as prone to Corruption as the bureaucracy, but it is perhaps less open to public scrutiny. In any case, private enterprise arrangements involve perhaps as much regulation and social control - but in the hands of powerful and unaccountable individuals and corporations rather than elected representatives. (In my experience, deregulated airlines have, if anything, more restrictions and impositions on customers than did publicly-regulated airlines.)

### Efficiency of land use

Another problem with the market is that it does not put land and resources to their most efficient use in terms of public policy objectives. The most profitable use is not necessarily the most efficient in terms of resource allocation or social benefits. Market solutions or outcomes are often costly in terms of indirect ramifications. A well known example was given by Hotelling using, for simplicity, the case of ice cream sellers along a given stretch of beach.<sup>1</sup> The first seller would naturally locate in the middle, creating the shortest average distance for purchasers to travel for ice cream. Where there were two sellers, however, the Planning solution would place them each at  $1/4$ th the length from the ends of the beach, to reduce the average travel distance to  $1/8$ th of the beach (optimal solution, Figure 5).

The market solution would be different. Seller A would locate next to seller B in order to capture all the traffic from the main length of the beach (stage 2). Seller B would then relocate to the opposite side of seller A for the same purpose (stage 3). Finally they would achieve the market solution of being juxtaposed right in the centre of the beach (stage 4). This creates the situation where the average travel distance is  $1/4$ th of the beach, rather than  $1/8$ th.

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<sup>1</sup> H. Hotelling, 1929, "Stability in Competition", *Economic Journal* 39, pp. 41-57.

**Figure 5: Market misallocation of land use**Optimal solution:

I.....A.....I.I.....B.....I

Market solution:

Stage 1:

I.....B.....I

Stage 2:

I.....A..I.I..B.....I

Stage 3:

I.....B..I.I..A.....I

Stage 4:

I.....A..I.I..B.....I

Projecting this case to other situations, transport costs and environmental impacts could be greater in the market 'solution'. For example, because roads are provided at public cost, and travel time costs incurred by consumers are not entered into the equation, these costs are often not considered in the calculations of private firms. The social costs of many individual consumers (wasted time, energy and petrol) can be enormous however.

**Planning and freedom**

A more general reason for Planning is that the 'visible' hand is more democratic than the invisible hand. It is a means to set collective goals for a society by which government policy and implementation can be judged. If government decisions are not made through an open and public process, they are made by and for special interests. Planners working in the corpocracy are unlikely to develop means of self-regulation that restrict their freedoms relative to others, because the corporate ethic (and survival) depend upon a competitive advantage. Perhaps the most universally-accepted collective social goal in Western society is 'freedom', although this means different things to different people. The main emotion generated against Planning has been its association with 'command and control' systems, while market has been associated with freedom. However, in a world with ever more people and consequently less space, 'freedom from' the adverse effects of other's actions becomes increasingly more important than 'freedom to' do what one wants. I would suggest that Planning can provide 'freedom from',

while the market provides 'freedom to'. Therefore, at this stage we need to explore the idea of freedom more closely.

While Planning supposedly runs counter to basic individual rights and freedoms, the imbalance between market and Planning spheres has meant that the reverse situation has occurred. It is today the unchecked power of those operating at the top of the market pyramid, with its tendency toward centralization, that militates against those very human attributes that the liberal state is meant to enshrine and protect. As discussed in Chapter 3, the alienation of the public estate gradually eliminates meaningful social choices and socially-responsible opportunities. This, along with the great differentials in wealth and power that are made possible by the conversion process, undermines basic rights and freedoms, which in turn leads to social conflict. Let us take some general examples.

### Freedom of choice

Freedom cannot be said to exist where there are no meaningful life quality choices. When cultural and biological diversity are gone, a greater selection of automatic tooth brushes or frozen TV dinners will be of little solace. More meaningful choice would be whether to live in the country or city, a choice which many in both the developing and over-developed worlds no longer have. One cannot live in bush or woodland areas if they are all under concrete.<sup>1</sup> Further, with privatization, or the transfer of public amenities to special interests, there are increasingly fewer free public environments to enjoy, either in the city or country. Currently, there is a push toward charging admissions for all public goods and facilities, such as museums and parks. Although the 'user pays' principle helps make people aware of the costs of their actions, its application in this context often excludes the poor, reduces their choices and often, in reality, becomes a substitute for intelligent management. Moreover, in the long term, it portends the end of environmental or non-material experiences and values that do not generate income.

### Freedom of movement

An important freedom is that of travel and free movement. It is one of the rights which separated the 'free world' from the wrong side of the 'iron curtain'. In fact, it is a right enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. Freedom to travel loses all meaning, however, where there is no difference between environments and cultures. There will soon be no where to go. Today most cities and suburbs are indistinguishable, except for their remaining topographical features, and most rural environments are being converted to monocultures by agri-business and agro-forestry. Rows of skinny trees, standing in formation, await harvesting where once

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<sup>1</sup> Many songbirds and other species are disappearing because of the disruptions of the ecology caused by roads and land clearing.

deep, mysterious forests sheltered incomprehensibly complex living communities. The environment is becoming homogenized, simplified, polluted, and partitioned into private fiefdoms. Where work can only be found in urban areas, it is impossible to escape urban blight, overcrowding and pollution. This is as if to build a prison around ourselves and throw away the key.

### Artistic freedom

In the West, we equate freedom with creativity and the human spirit, and believe artistic freedom also sets us apart from totalitarian regimes. But it is hypocritical to accuse others of cultural repression if we do not preserve and nourish cultural diversity ourselves. Indigenous cultures are being systematically destroyed at home and around the world in the name of 'land rights' for the military-industrial complex. This is no exaggeration. Genocide of indigenous cultures is still being practiced in places like Guatemala and South Africa. Art forms that were developed over a period of hundreds and thousands of years are being wiped out for the short-term profits of a few. Such cultural imperialism, on the part of both left- and right-wing regimes, has led to violent political reactions such as the Basque movement in Spain, and separatist movements in the Balkans. The freedom to express cultural traditions through various art forms is not surviving in the market system.

### Security

Freedom from harm is surely as essential as freedom to express oneself. Crime and a break down in social organization is inevitable given the stresses of a dehumanized environment and the great differentials in access to resources. Where the use of public resources is subject to decision making by or at the behest of the corpocracy, opportunities are created for only the rich to get richer. Where wealth can only be generated through one's money and not one's labour, the deck is stacked against wage earners, as well as their offspring who do not have the benefits of capital accumulation. Street crime and violence have many causes, not the least of which is hopelessness. Poverty is relative and the disparity between rich and poor is growing. The United States is developing its own Third World, with over three million people now homeless and 32 million living in poverty. As periodic street riots in the U.S. have demonstrated (as in the 1992 Los Angeles riots), people will not agree to remain in poverty when there is no hope for the future. There is freedom for no one in a divided society with an impoverished class (now composed mostly of women and children).

### Democracy

Institutionalized or 'organized' crime is even more dangerous over the long term than street crime. For example, the illegal dumping of toxic chemicals can cause more deaths and suffering in the long term than terrorist bombs. But 'laissez faire' market activity also subverts democracy. In Australia, the 1980s saw powerful businessmen attempt to bring down

governments through bribes, destabilization and stand-over tactics.<sup>1</sup> The drug war in Colombia and Mafia activities in Italy have profound effects on democracy, as many elected politicians and judges who oppose organized crime have been assassinated. Government involvement in the commercial arms market has had a devastating effect on democracy.<sup>2</sup> At the behest of arms merchants, governments and security blocs pressure their allies to buy weapons systems that they can neither afford nor use. The often covert use of power at the international level creates dependency at the same time as it subverts democracy. For instance, Spain elected a Socialist Government which promised to close United States bases. Once in power the new government refused to carry out its promise because, it was widely believed, it feared destabilization.<sup>3</sup>

The public is increasingly losing control over its own destiny through the market-based allocative system. Perhaps the best examples are the allocation of control over crop species to the corpocracy (called 'plant variety rights', somewhat ironically, given that it has reduced the number of species), and the patenting of genetically-engineered species.<sup>4</sup> In 1987, the United States Patent Office extended a 1980 United States Supreme Court ruling that allowed the patenting of a genetically-engineered micro-organism to include genetically-engineered animals (except humans).<sup>5</sup> The gene pool is being sold off to special interests! These cases represent an irreversible decision made by and for lobbyists for special interests. As Jeremy Rivkin notes, all of nature has been finally "debased to a commodity status".<sup>6</sup> Ominously, we have seen already that Man is willing to use food, or starvation, as a political weapon in the Third World.<sup>7</sup>

### Health

Finally, if there is a basic human right, it is health, or life itself. Poverty is the world's greatest killer of children. In the United States, eight times as many poor children die of disease as non-poor children. The relation between environment and physical health is obvious

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1. Following the stock market crash of 1988 many of Australia's wealthiest businessmen went bankrupt, and some have faced jail terms.

<sup>2</sup> Janis Birkeland, 1986, *The Environment and Weapons Trade* (Hobart: Dept. of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania).

<sup>3</sup> I heard this view expressed by many during a four month stay in Spain in 1986.

<sup>4</sup> David Suzuki and Peter Knudtson, 1988, *Genethics: The Ethics of Engineering Life* (London: Allen & Unwin).

<sup>5</sup> Jeremy Rivkin, 1991, *Biosphere Politics: A New Consciousness for a New Century* (NY: Crown Publishers) p. 69-70.

<sup>6</sup> Rivkin, 1991, above at p. 70.

<sup>7</sup> See generally Susan George, 1979, *Feeding the Few: Corporate Control of Food* (Wash. D.C.: Institute of Policy Studies); John W. Warnock, 1989, *The Politics of Hunger* (NY: Methuen).

to most of us, and soon even Patriarchal social science may try to determine if access to a natural environment and belief in a future is necessary for mental health. In the market, however, research goes into exotic high-technology forms of medicine (often to prolong the lives of the terminally ill).<sup>1</sup> When we talk about human health today, we are really talking about nothing less than the health of our global environment and all its natural components.<sup>2</sup> Species loss, pollution, and military adventures have adverse multiplier effects upon the food chain and ecosystems upon which we depend absolutely, as well as upon the human spirit.

In conclusion, these examples suggest ways in which the market fails to protect basic rights, needs and freedoms. These freedoms are inseparable from the preservation of non-human nature and cultural diversity. The priority has been on 'freedom to' use human and natural resources for one's private ends. The problems that stem from this rights-based conception of freedom still tend to be discussed as isolated problems requiring 'bandaids'. They are seen as an inevitable, though regrettable, side-effect of the exercise of freedom, rather than as central to a system that favours rights and, therefore, favours those with more power to exercise their rights. It has become impossible to repair the environment after the fact and, even if it were, it would not be affordable. In an age of toxic poisons and nuclear weapons, the stakes and risks of the bandaid approach are simply too high. Clearly, it is necessary to *prevent* environmental damage, risk, and conflict in the first place. This the market cannot do. Hence, the resolution of environmental problems, and the social conflict they entail, requires some form of Planning system: a public decision-making framework that will enable society to debate and decide the underlying Ethical issues and to engage in preventative planning.

## The Impotence of Planning

Having defended the value of Planning in general, we now discuss what is wrong with the existing system. I address the actual functions of Planning and suggest more appropriate ones. In the last chapter, I maintained that Planning is structurally integrated with development interests through corporatist decision-making processes. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, Planning is neither as autonomous, nor different in character, from business decision making. In the following chapter, I argue that there is a similar convergence between business and Planning on the level of detailed decision rules and techniques. If we acknowledge that there is a growing fusion of private and public sector decision making (the same actors, processes, structures and goals), this suggests that there are no restraints upon the individualist values of

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<sup>1</sup> See generally Ivan Illich, 1976, *Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Wealth* (NY: Pantheon).

<sup>2</sup> For example, according to UNEP, over one third the world's population or two billion people, suffer chronic water shortages and UNICEF estimates that over seven million children die every year due to lack of safe drinking water. Paul Ekins, Mayer Hillman and Robert Hutchinson, 1992, *above* (London: Gaia Books) at p. 17.

the market on behalf of broader social interests. Price efficiency comes at the cost of fundamental decision-making safeguards such as separation of powers and checks and balances.<sup>1</sup>

One might ask, of course, what difference does that make, if Planning nonetheless guides the nature and location of development more 'efficiently'? Is that not enough? But does Planning guide development or achieve efficiency? It is first argued here that Planning is, in fact, relatively impotent, having little effect on political decision-making or land usage. This then raises the question: what purpose *does* it serve?

As Planning theoretically guides land use and development it (and the public sector generally) is held responsible for many social problems that correlate to spatial distribution, such as urban sprawl, loss of prime agricultural land, the development of low-income ghettos, and so forth. However, the main factors determining the use or spatial distribution of land and resources lie outside the narrow professional scope of Planning as presently structured. For example, the U.S. transportation system, which commenced in 1956, had by 1974 consumed 26 million acres of rural American land by 1974, fostered suburbia, urban sprawl, and commercial and industrial fringe development.<sup>2</sup> While the planning for this system was carried out by engineers, not environmental planners, this transportation system had irreversible impacts on land use and the environment (thus increasing the need for planners).

A recent Planning text demonstrates the futility of the planner's mission. It says that the *root problem* facing town planners is to accommodate changes in the rate and distribution of population growth.<sup>3</sup> Planners, it says, must try to maintain a social, economic, and physical infrastructure in cities facing population and employment decline and an associated decline in locally-raised revenue, and to provide appropriate levels of service in the receiving areas.<sup>4</sup> This conjures up images of the sorcerer's apprentice in his futile effort to mop up the spillover effects of the invisible hand. Planners, after all, cannot control population growth or the supply and demand of housing. While, local council planners may determine an appropriate amount of public housing, the supply will depend on funding available for low-income housing from the national or state government, mortgage rates and their availability, and so forth. In this regard, lobbyists deal directly with politicians and arguably have more influence than planners.

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<sup>1</sup> It is questionable whether the alleged price efficiency of market economies is real, because controlled, comparative, empirical studies are impossible to conduct.

<sup>2</sup> R. H. Jackson, 1983, "The Federal Government", in James H. Carr and Edward E. Duensing, eds., 1983, *Land Use Issues of the 80s* (NJ: Transaction) pp. 178-189.

<sup>3</sup> M. J. Bruton, ed., 1984, *The Spirit and Purpose of Planning* (London: Hutchinson) at p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Bruton, 1984, *above* at p. 19.

Further, notwithstanding a policy of, say, urban infill development and an investment in urban redevelopment, the preferences of home-buyers and industrialists may simply be to move outside the inner city. Or, new employment opportunities beyond a given district may create a demand within a nearby district for commuter homes. More recently, the electronics revolution has made much of traditional location theory anachronistic. Traditional Planning, it would seem, can only chase demographic trends.

But even when development occurs where called for by Planning schemes and policies, it is questionable whether physical planners have any significant influence over the shape or pattern of that development. As a case in point, Chris Pickvance challenges the general assumption that physical planners have really been responsible for such infamous failures of design and social planning as the high-rise flats and decline of inner-city areas in post war Britain.<sup>1</sup> He shows that the determining factor in these urban development patterns was the largely unrestricted operation of market forces in land, property, and finance - notwithstanding the existence of a system of development control. Planning was not at fault - it was merely irrelevant.

In one of his examples, Pickvance establishes the connection between government subsidies and local authority high-rise buildings. He then shows that the subsidies which promoted high-rise flats were in response to a desire to introduce technological innovation into the building industry - rather than in response to Planning policy or principles:

This involved the encouragement of prefabrication of materials, more on-site mechanization, better coordination, and standardization of design - in a word, "industrialization". According to this argument high-rise housing was necessary to provide the scale of operation and opportunity for use of standard designs to justify the introduction of new techniques. Thus the main beneficiary of high-rise housing was intended by central government to be the building industry, in the first place, with subsequent benefits in lower costs to the public purse. But the latter did not occur, with the result that subsidies for high-rise housing primarily helped the building industry to adopt new technology with probable benefits to it in other areas of construction such as offices and hotels.<sup>2</sup>

Sillince provides another example of how land use is not demonstrably affected by Planning, even where it is operative. He shows that while the English 1947 Town and Country Planning Act was credited with saving rural land for agricultural use, the calculation overlooked several outside factors discouraging urban sprawl. War and government decisions to encourage agriculture after 1940 meant, among other things, that "agricultural land prices rose, farming

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<sup>1</sup> Chris Pickvance, 1982, "Physical Planning and Market Forces in Urban Development", Chris Paris, ed., *Critical Readings in Planning Theory* (Sydney: Pergamon Press).

<sup>2</sup> Chris Pickvance, 1982, *above* at p. 75.



became more profitable, especially on the good land near the lowland towns, and farmers became more reluctant to fragment their operations".<sup>1</sup>

So we see that the representation of traditional Planning as a constraint on the market system and therefore capable of protecting the public interest in health and environmental quality is questionable. But surely Planning influences government policy? Apparently not very much. I have not met a planner who feels that planners have a satisfactory influence within government. While planners serve in an advisory capacity to elected representatives, the degree to which they are consulted depends on the importance of the issue to powerful interests.<sup>2</sup> This has been the case, for example, with several controversial projects in Australia.<sup>3</sup> Environmental planners are often not even consulted before irreversible decisions are made, such as the siting of major developments. When political decisions do benefit from Planning expertise, it is usually after the dispositive decisions are made; the planner's role becomes to make the decision 'work', spatially, after the fact. Moreover, Planning recommendations, codes and processes are often ignored or by-passed via 'fast-track' legislation for political expediency.<sup>4</sup> (The new state Planning system proposed for Tasmania will legitimize fast track legislation in larger projects.)

Perhaps more significantly, many decisions considered to be squarely within the proper domain of 'political' decision making restrict the potential of society to plan, by cutting off future land use options. Immigration policy, for example, is a political decision which can dramatically undermine any plans for a sustainable society. Nonetheless, the Costigan Royal Commission in Australia, which was established to advise the government on immigration policy, rejected the suggestion that it have a biologist on staff to look at environmental issues, such as the carrying capacity of the land (as proposed by Australian Democrat Senator John Coulter). Large, expensive Planning projects have been undertaken to determine how best to accommodate a predicted population growth on the unquestioned presumption that the land can

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<sup>1</sup> John Sillince, 1986, *A Theory of Planning* (Aldershot: Gower) at p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> For example, when responsible for design review in a large planning department, I was told to stay away from a particular project because there were "powerful people" involved. A committee of important business people and officials reviewed the design instead, without reference to the officially adopted city policies (a 'corporatist' design project).

<sup>3</sup> Australia abounds with examples of this pattern: at the federal level, there was the 'VFT' (Very Fast Train), The 'Space Base' at Cape York Peninsula, and the 'MFP' (Multifunction Polis); at the state level, there was the Electrona Silicon Smelter and Wesley Vale controversies in Tasmania; and at the local level, there was the Darling Harbour project and Monorail system in Sydney.

<sup>4</sup> For example, plans for a controversial International Hotel in Hobart bypassed the established planning principles, procedures, policies, and regulations over the opposition of the normally apolitical architecture and planning institutes (the RAlA and RAPI). As a result of massive public protests there were design modifications, but these did not meet the substantive objections of the opponents.

support the increased population.<sup>1</sup> For example, a supposedly 'ecologically sustainable' plan to accommodate a 1.8 million increase in the Melbourne area did *not* look at the ecological feasibility of this increase. Such Planning exercises drain public finances, but serve to facilitate development by giving (relative) investment certainty.

Another example of political decisions pre-empting Planning is the case of subsidies to, say, the auto industry to promote economic growth. This encourages energy consumption, pollution, and urban sprawl, and contributes to the greenhouse effect. Similarly, subsidies to coal extraction in Australia have diverted funds from solar energy research. Planners are called upon after the fact to mitigate the impacts of these 'social forces', but there is little they can do. Once people have cars and fossil-fuel heating systems, conversion becomes too expensive. In private business decisions, these 'sunk costs' would be ignored. In collective political decision making, however, private businesses have investments in these ecologically-inefficient systems and so prevent the sunk costs from being disregarded.

### Instrumental functions of Planning

We have discussed how Planning is largely impotent in affecting political policy and market behaviour. But some development interests go even further and argue that Planning causes patent inefficiency in resource allocation. The New Right maintains that Planning constrains the market, creates environmental problems and is, perhaps, altogether expendable. Yet powerful resource extraction and development interests often operate *above* Planning controls (through fast-track legislation and so on) and dictate *de facto* government policy towards land and resources. As explained earlier corporate and military power is now such that CIMBIs do their own planning. If the above conflicting points are true, then it follows that Planning must exist by the grace of these same interests that seem to perpetually complain about government interference through Planning. Thus, perhaps the apparent ineffectiveness and inefficiency of Planning serves to benefit existing power relationships in resource allocation. Is government Planning only needed to legitimize the transfer process and manage social conflict surrounding the conversion of resources from public to private sectors?

#### Facilitating resource transfers

It must first be noted that Planning in the urban arena is much more advanced than regional Planning in terms of adjusting externalities between public and private interests. For example, regulatory schemes which exact percentages of subdivisions or large buildings for public amenities (open space, child care facilities and so forth), or those which allow for trading

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Planning and Housing, 1992, *Shaping Victoria's Future : A Place to Live* (Melbourne: Government Printer)

pollution rights, are really attempts to rectify problems of externalities. However, these trade off the costs and benefits of development, by 'balancing environment and development'. The 'balance' is that point where the maximum amount of growth is allowed before dissatisfaction or social conflict from above or below begins to threaten political stability and power relations.

With regard to the non-urban natural (as opposed to the Man-made) environment, however, regulatory schemes are practically non-existent, with the exception of land preserved as wildlife and habitat reserves. However, at the regional level some 'planning schemes' have recently been introduced at the behest of development interests (in Australia and Canada) which legitimize the transfer process under the veil of a formal public decision-making system. A case in point is the recently adopted resource security legislation in Tasmania mentioned above. At first blush, it would appear to replace ad hoc decision taking regarding forest allocation with a master plan to be overseen by a (future) Planning Commission. Generally, in a market system, a master plan allocates land to appropriate uses *in advance* of specific development proposals to put land to its best use without dictating specific uses. In this case, however, forests are zoned for production without planning. Native forests will still, as before, be allocated through private supply contracts between the government, the Forestry Commission and powerful timber companies. The decision-making system is therefore substantially the same in this new scheme, but planning is foreclosed by predetermined zones. The proposed creation of a new Planning Commission creates the impression of a transfer of decision-making power to an independent 'balanced' body of professionally-trained decision makers, but the corporatist system itself is actually further entrenched.

The overall policy guideline of resource security remains production. Its underlying presumption is that forests *should* be logged, so advocates of forest protection are given the burden of proving that areas should be withdrawn from production. Further, the opportunity for adversarial issue identification in policy development is bypassed. In fact, the future rezoning of areas is expressly prevented if already found to contain heritage or Aboriginal values. Such facts are only to be considered if their discovery was made since passage of the legislation. This means that the planning process is pre-empted, if not nullified, by the existence of a Planning Commission whose mandate is *not* to plan, but to review applications for variances from a *de facto* plan made 'of, for and by' the forest industry (of course, the Commission does perform other tasks).

The Planning Commission will advise Cabinet on cases where the withdrawal of forests from production is proposed. Cabinet makes the real allocation decisions, and Cabinet is an executive body which deals with a multitude of issues in an ad hoc manner. The Commission serves as functionaries or staff to the Premier and Cabinet. Therefore, the new Planning system cannot achieve what I have suggested is its broader purpose of 'preparing for the future'. In short, although a comprehensive zoning scheme for native forests was introduced,

it was for the purpose of preventing any substantive Planning and pre-empting public debate. The end result of a costly process of Planning 'reform' is still, therefore, an ad hoc and power-based system biased ultimately in favour of resource consumption as against preservation.

## Subsidies

There are several kinds of subsidies that Planning facilitates in a capitalist economy. These include wealth transfers, impact mitigation, and conflict mitigation or displacement.

### Wealth transfers

As noted above, a major justification for Planning and land use regulation derives from the failure of the market to internalize the private costs of development. However, if Planning were achieving the internalization of environmental costs, the costs of remedial action would not be so high. In Strahan, Tasmania, a mining company was permitted to dump waste (including copper, cadmium, nickel, and zinc) into the King River for a century. The King River is technically dead and will continue to pollute Macquarie Harbour (through drainage from acid dumps) for decades. The government extended the company's pollution exemption with the stipulation that it contribute A\$150,000 toward an environmental study. This, however, would in no way begin to cover the costs of pollution to the town. When the company leaves in 1997, the municipality is not likely to be able to obtain compensation as the firm is based off-shore.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, due to international competition and pressure from powerful companies, the public does not usually even receive the market price for its alienated resources. For example, Robert Repetto (World Resources Institute, Wash, DC.), has shown that, in the United States, timber rights are often sold off for a cost that is less than the transaction costs of preparing for the sale, let alone the public cost of growing the forest. He has estimated that the United States taxpayers could save US\$100 million annually just *not to sell* these forests. At present 76 of the 156 national forests in the U.S. sell timber at a loss, despite management plans, representing a direct subsidy to private production interests.<sup>2</sup>

Such transfers of public resources to special interests is legitimized and concealed by Planning processes. For example, forest management plans are often developed to meet the needs of resource development interests first. Although allowing for multiple uses, the areas conserved are often those *not* of high conservation value, but rather those areas that could not economically be felled. Of course, these practices result from broader power relations in society and the individual (forest) planners involved cannot be expected to alter the system

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<sup>1</sup> The *Examiner* Launceston, Jan. 31, 1993, at p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Robert C., Repetto, 1988, *The Forest for the Trees?: Government Policies and the Misuse of Forest Resources* (Wash. D.C.: World Resources Institute); Robert C. Repetto and Malcolm Gillis, 1988, *Public Policies and the Misuse of Forest Resources* (NY: Cambridge University Press).

itself. However, it is (largely unpaid) environmentalists who have generally researched and brought these facts to general public attention rather than professional foresters, planners, or academics (see intellectual suppression below).

Other astonishing examples of public subsidies for transnational corporate interests are found in Australia's proposed Multi-function Polis (MFP) and Very Fast Train (VFT) Projects.<sup>1</sup> The proposals to build the MFP and VFT as (nominally) privately-financed ventures appeared in 1987. The consortium behind the Very Fast Train proposal also argued that they should receive part of the 'betterment' or capital gains tax on the unearned increment that would accrue to properties due to the new rail line. Public taxes would therefore, in effect, be charged by private development interests. (Perhaps the corpocracy now considers itself synonymous with the 'citizen'?) Betterment existed in Tasmanian Planning legislation since the 1940s, but was never implemented: now development interests are taking up the concept for their own benefit.

The public could also end up holding the bag. According to Ron Pain, very fast trains have lost money in countries having 10 times the Australian population adjacent to the route. Also, the required overseas borrowing would increase the national debt, government support would be required for the compulsory acquisition of (4-500,000 hectares) land for the track and new towns,<sup>2</sup> and the project might have to be completed at public expense if abandoned by the developers.

The developments associated with the VFT will provoke huge amounts of freight which, because the VFT cannot carry heavy freight, will have to go by road creating road construction and maintenance costs to be borne by the taxpayer<sup>3</sup>

The irony, as pointed out by Pain, is that the government has starved the publicly-owned rail system for years, which would now be lost. It could have been upgraded to reduce environmental damage. (At present, the VFT project is in abeyance but the MFP is being built in Adelaide.)

### Impact mitigation

I have suggested that Planning often operates after the basic decisions are made. Therefore, Planning is not geared toward preventing environmental damage, but only fixing, mitigating or cleaning it up. Impact mitigation is another form of subsidy. The problem of Planning in a market system is exemplified by the proposal to build the Very Fast Train (VFT), above, which

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<sup>1</sup> See generally Ross E. Mouer and Yoshio Sugimoto, 1990, *The MFP Debate: A Background* (Bundoora, Vict.: La Trobe University Press); and Ron Pain, 1990, *A Tale of New Cities: Japan's Plans for Australia* (Melbourne: R. Pain).

<sup>2</sup> Ron Pain, 1990, *above* at p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ron Pain, 1990, *above* at p. 2.

would connect the three major eastern cities in Australia.<sup>1</sup> At an international Planning conference in Sydney,<sup>2</sup> it was explained by the project manager that the main reason for the project was to find a use for Japanese investment capital. The design criteria were dictated by engineering constraints, which amounted to the shortest, straightest route between destinations. The location of the track would create a 'growth corridor', which its proponents proudly proclaimed would be the greatest land use determinant since Australia was settled by Europeans. There was no prior analysis, public or private, nor public debate regarding where growth should occur, if at all<sup>3</sup> - that fundamental question was pre-empted by market and engineering constraints upon Planning.

Public planners would be called upon to select the best sites for terminals or to mitigate environmental impacts of the physical barrier created by the high speed train corridor. Planners could do little for the wildlife habitats and native forests that would be divided and hence destroyed. Of course, planners would have the opportunity to participate in schemes to control *new* development surrounding VFT stations, but this is still 'remedial' Planning - making the private initiatives work. Bridges, roads and public utilities would need to be constructed or relocated in the first place.

### Conflict displacement

While planners are often not involved in the more 'significant' decisions either, they sometimes serve as mediators for developers and producers where there is public resistance to development proposals - and their mediation is paid for by the public. With regard to less significant decisions, as we have seen, planners have comparatively little impact compared with industrial 'subsidies', which are a function of political influence. Yet, because Planning is seen as a distinct decision-making arena, planners are held accountable for the geographical and spatial character of growth. Thus, Planning works to displace the conflict that results when the 'invisible hand' of the market gets into the public cookie jar, by directing public animosity towards the bureaucracy. Some of the other ways Planning performs this conflict management function is by:

(a) obfuscating the conversion process by removing the debate outside the political arena to an ostensibly neutral, professional one, though the decisions themselves are often value-laden and 'political';<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See generally Ron Pain, 1990; *above*.

<sup>2</sup> Talk by Mr. Castleman at the International Conference on Local Planning, sponsored by RAPI, LGPA, and AACP at Darling Harbour, Sydney (March, 1990).

<sup>3</sup> Some ecologists have argued that the human population already far exceeds Australia's carrying capacity.

<sup>4</sup> An example of this is the Helsham inquiry, see Appendix 1.

(b) legitimizing the process by, for example, positing the debate in technical terms which exclude Ethical considerations;

(c) focussing on separate claims and controversies to deflect debate from their relation to basic social divisions, the public interests at stake and the cumulative effects of decisions;

(d) defining social impacts of development in a narrow way to exclude many externalities and indirect subsidies;

(e) channelling interest group competition into formal processes where precedents (past mistakes) and power relationships are established; that is, creating and enforcing rules of the game (such as establishing the burden of proof, or rights of standing and appeal);

(f) limiting decision-making methods to distributional issues, rather than Ethical or environmental ones (such as whether to allow other species to live);

(g) removing moral responsibility away from the 'corpocracy' and placing accountability into a complex bureaucracy; and, finally,

(h) providing a barometer for public resistance to development or pollution, and modifying impacts to an extent that development does not threaten business ventures or the business 'climate'. This last function of Planning is, again, called 'finding the balance between conservation and development', or Planning as the automatic transmission of the resource allocation system which presently gears the speed of development to that which can occur without social disorder.

In sum, I have suggested that, often, Planning practice (a) is incompatible with environmental protection, (b) has little impact upon decision making (at least until the basic decisions have been made by power brokers), and (c) subsidizes development by transferring wealth, mitigating the adverse impacts of development, and displacing the social conflict surrounding this transfer process. Not surprisingly, then, environmentalists argue that there is virtually no Planning. Yet free marketeers protest that there is too much Planning. To them, the Planning system is unnecessary or counterproductive, and deregulation could only improve the situation. It is true, of course, that (poor) Planning processes can create inefficiencies and inequities directly. For example, Planning processes can impose costs on developers which are then passed on to the public through: (a) increased development costs from the delays and transaction costs entailed in government Planning and mediation; (b) inbuilt incentives to misdirect resources into influencing the regulatory process (kick backs and lobbying); (c) both speculation and uncertainty in the land market that result from changing government policy through master plans; and (d) structural conflict between development and conservation interests, with its attendant opportunity costs.

At this point, one might be wondering how the Planning system has managed to be so many bad things to so many people? Why do these negative functions of Planning, or various forms of subsidies, remain unchallenged? One reason is that the public/private duality allows each sector to avoid responsibility. Another is that the concept of 'corruption' is narrowly defined to exclude corruption that is due to the nature of the institutional system and culture. Finally, the commonly perceived model of the Planning system at the Structure level is obfuscatory as it does not correspond to reality. Let us explore these points in detail.

### Buckpassing

At the Superstructure level, we saw that the hierarchical, dualistic model prevents reform by obfuscating the nature and operation of power relations. The same is true at the Structure level. First, Planning can only perform these transfer functions if it is seen as an autonomous institution of government juxtaposed with the market (see Figure 2, Chapter 3). In the public imagination, Planning exists as a separate technical, independent, and relatively value-neutral operation intended to assist efficient and rational private sector development in the public interest. It therefore provides politicians with a set of concepts to justify policies, and give plans and decisions an aura of being 'rational' or 'comprehensive'.<sup>1</sup> If Planning were instead seen as subject to power relations, it would be less effective in serving the interests of the powerful.

Second, a model which presents Planning as autonomous impedes reform by encouraging speculation to the effect that either more Planning, or alternatively its elimination, will benefit the public. We are led to debate two alternatives - more regulation (Planning) or more free enterprise - rather than reconsidering the overlapping of Planning with other decision-making spheres. Therefore, some who believe Planning is necessary to protect the shared public environment have invested vast amounts of time, money and energy debating the pro's and con's of decentralizing, centralizing, or reorganizing Planning, as if it could be extricated from contextual power relations.

While bureaucratic, hierarchical structures have inherent problems, that have been discussed *ad infinitum* in the literature, these problems do not establish that some form of privatization is a viable alternative. These problems relate to the inherent problems of power structures, and cannot therefore be solved by merely replacing a publicly-controlled power structure (the bureaucracy) with an uncontrollable one (corporate anarchism), through privatization or deregulation. Both command and competitive resource allocation systems lead to the same

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<sup>1</sup> John Sillince, 1986, *above* at p. 50.



result - a self-sustaining power structure. The difference largely consists of who makes the rules. A de-regulated 'market' is, in fact, highly regulated - but by the private sector.<sup>1</sup>

Also, the irreversibility of privatization or deregulation must be factored into the equation. As world events of late have demonstrated with staggering frequency, it is easier to overthrow a government than to overthrow the military or corporate power structures that dictate that government's policy. In being pressured to sell off their assets, state bureaucracies are now in the same position as many Third World nations. Regardless of whether this trend is for better or for worse, it is a fundamental turning point in Western 'civilization'. The move to a feudalistic capitalism, which probably spells the end of the natural environment, has not been a matter of conscious public choice, yet it has been falsely promoted as democratic, or at least an inevitable consequence of democracy.

The problem with a public/private duality that obscures Planning's service to special interests is that each sector can avoid responsibility. Earlier we saw that since the resource allocation arenas are viewed as separate in the public imagination, the buck can be passed endlessly between the public sector (politicians and planners) and (the private sector developers' economists). This occurs at the structure level as well. For example, political economists allied with the private sector do not accept responsibility for the effect of economic 'forces' on land use and the physical environment, because the spatial distribution of land use is the responsibility of Planning. Instead, they tend to take the position that spatial distribution affects the economy (eg. rivers determine city location). Planners, in contrast, emphasize how the economy or technology affects spatial distribution (eg. containerization determines port location).

Within the public sector, the politicians and planners can also 'pass the buck' (Figure 2). While planners advise governments on policy and implementation, they maintain the resolution of social and environmental problems to be, ultimately, a matter of politics.<sup>2</sup> Thus many planners do not accept responsibility for Planning failure, as their role is only technocratic and advisory. After all, planners may *advise* on major Planning issues, but it is for representatives to actually decide, as Planning decisions are "ultimately political". The failure of planners

has been due in part to the inadequacies of their ideas, but more to the inadequate political support which planning has received. This failure of political support stems from the nature of politics in a property-

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the airlines are now regulated by special interests and it is at least debatable whether the 'efficiencies' accrue to the public when, for instance, the cost of social dislocations such as the concomitant 'closing' of towns is considered.

<sup>2</sup> For example, see Michael Goldsmith, 1980, *Politics, Planning and the City* (London: Hutchinson) at p. 128.

owning democracy. The structure of political power has been and is such as to protect property owners and to pamper rural interests.<sup>1</sup>

The argument in favour of political decision making is based on the 'accountability' of elected representatives. However, politicians are not accountable in a meaningful way. Accountability is passed down the ladder through agencies, such as Planning, which serve to insulate elected representatives from the consequences of unpopular decisions. While politicians are subject to electoral sanctions, this remedy is not relevant to environmental issues, as it is punitive rather than preventative. And, since the public knows the opposition party will do the same or worse, the electoral sanction is a pyrrhic one. Finally, perks and membership in a social 'elite' can have greater material value to a politician than re-election; after all, politics for many is a springboard to lucrative corporate positions.

To make a long story short, we have a merry-go-round with planners, economists and politicians all structurally incapable of planning, yet passing blame onto the others. None of the actual decision makers are held accountable in meaningful ways for the long-term consequences of their decisions. The proposed resource allocation model (Figure 4, Chapter 4), by having clear lines of Ethical responsibility, would make buckpassing more difficult. At the Structure level, a similar reconstruction is necessary, which we now discuss.

### Systemic Corruption

Another way in which the transfer of wealth to CIMBIs is obfuscated is through the use of language to conceal the moral character of the transfer process. It is seen as neither right or wrong, but just inherent in the nature of democracy. The conversion process is often justified, ironically, by reference to market forces. It is often said that resource extractors claim that the 'market' makes them do it; they 'have to' chop quicker and cheaper because of the world market, even though it would cost the public less to leave the trees standing. The market does not apply if resources are sold off below cost. The transfer of public goods to private interests by a system that does not sustain vital and irreplaceable resources, especially public health and wilderness, involves the misuse of political or administrative power for the diversion of resources to special interests. When such issues are cloaked in value-neutral terms, such as 'externalities' or 'values', the personal, social, and environmental impacts are hidden beneath abstractions.

In order to begin to correct the pathologies created by the above word associations, false dualisms, and misconceptions, it is necessary to redefine the Planning system in a way that

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<sup>1</sup> Leonie Sandercock, 1976, *Cities for Sale: Property, Politics, and Urban Planning in Australia* (London: Heinemann) at p. 215.

exposes its key problems. In this regard, a focus on the abuse of power leads to different criteria: a Planning system that allows special interests to receive benefits disproportionate to their contribution to the public by preventing genuine choice, would be seen as 'Corrupt'.

How can an institution be corrupt? In theory, any government institution such as Planning exists solely to protect and promote the 'public interest'. By definition, an agent or agency is defined as corrupt where the interests of the principal are betrayed to benefit that agent or a third party. In the case of a government agency, however, the 'principal' is the general public. So a person, institution, or process which transfers public goods or resources to special interests to the net disadvantage of the general public should be seen as 'corrupt'.

The term 'corruption' has been narrowly construed in our society so as to make *systemic* corruption hard to see. It is used where: (a) an individual (b) intentionally betrays the trust of the (c) organization for (d) monetary (or in kind) gain (e) by violating organizational rules. These limitations block our perception of widespread systemic corruption, such as where (a) a public organization (b) unintentionally betrays the trust of the (c) general public (d) due to ideological filters (e) by following organizational (and institutional) rules. Because this latter set of conditions is not perceived as corruption, the phenomenon is less subject to disapproval. Also, because people identify with government institutions 'of, for, and by' the people, disapproval requires self-criticism. Therefore, there is a tendency to deny that institutional corruption exists (as opposed to corrupt individuals).

If Planning serves to transfer public resources and costs from public to private sectors, it cannot therefore resolve the central cause of environmental conflict - the alienation, depletion and degradation of the public domain. This may be painfully obvious, but it casts a different slant on the usual progressive interpretation of the problem. This is that the state manipulates consent by obstructing democracy and disempowering citizens.<sup>1</sup> But while democracy may be a necessary precondition to building a sustainable society, it is not sufficient. Public needs would not triumph over private wants if people simply had better information. The materialistic desires of average people are probably no less than those of the powerful, just harder for them to obtain. This is one reason why voting systems are not necessarily the most rational form of public choice system when it comes to determining Ethical questions.

### **Intellectual suppression**

One of the main ways in which institutional Corruption is perpetuated is through intellectual suppression, where "a person is attacked because their research, teaching or public statements

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, John Forester, 1989, *above* at p. 179.

are threatening to a powerful interest group".<sup>1</sup> To use a recent example from Tasmania, the Mt. Lyle Mining company threatened legal action to stop the publication of an honours thesis which examined the environmental impacts of their operations on Macquarie Harbour and the local citizens. The thesis showed that the levels of mercury and other metals in some types of fish exceeded safety standards. To their credit, the student's academic supervisors publicly backed her study, however.<sup>2</sup>

There are many more subtle ways in which intellectual suppression operates. One disturbing pattern is that the perpetrators of Corrupt practices are often protected by institutions, while the 'whistleblowers' lose their jobs and/or promotional opportunities. A common form of persecution is character assassination by rumour, which is particularly difficult to defend oneself against.<sup>3</sup>

In Tasmania, as in the other Australian states, intellectual suppression is legitimized by law. The state Services Act says that a permanent employee who "without the permission of the Minister administering the Agency in which he is employed or otherwise in the ordinary course of his duties divulges any information gained by him in his employment in the state Service, is guilty of an offence". It is ironic in a state where citizenship is a criteria for employment at the higher levels of government, that one must give up one's basic human rights to work in government.<sup>4</sup> The act also provides an excuse for not speaking out. According to Isla MacGregor, scientists with the CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization) do not have these constraints and yet will not speak out.<sup>5</sup>

### The false policy-making model

One remedy for the planning problems covered in this chapter is to redefine the relationship of Planning to the market and political systems so that it is less easy for decision makers to 'pass the buck' and escape accountability. To do so, we must refine the simpler models proposed in Chapters 3 and 4, which dealt only with resource allocation writ large, and hence treated the market and Planning arenas as monolithic spheres. In the conventional model,

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<sup>1</sup> Brian Martin, 1992, "Intellectual Suppression: Why Environmental Scientists are Afraid to Speak out", *Habitat Australia* pp. 11-14, at p. 11. See also Brian Martin, C.M. Ann Baker, Clyde Manwell and Cedric Pugh, 1986, *above*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Mercury Newspaper*, April 7, 1993, at p. 11.

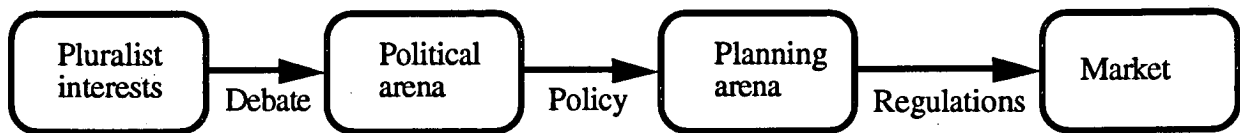
<sup>3</sup> Brian Martin, 1992, "Scientific Fraud and the Power Structure of Science", *Prometheus* 10 (1) pp. 83-98.

<sup>4</sup> See Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

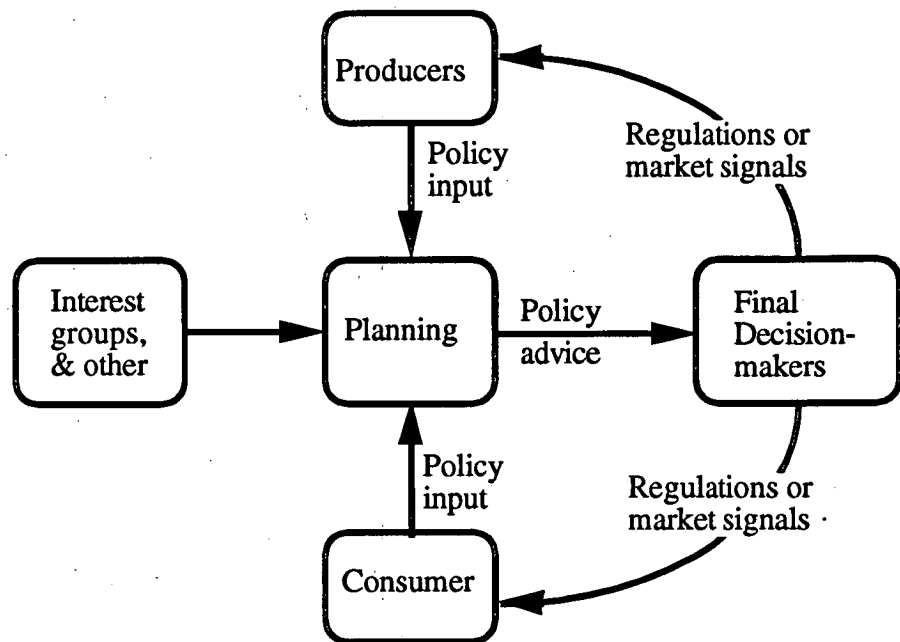
<sup>5</sup> See MacGregor, 1993, *above*.

Planning is seen as a relatively separate sphere that regulates and constrains the market, upon policy advice from political bodies like Congress, Parliament or City Councils (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Conventional descriptive model of policy development**

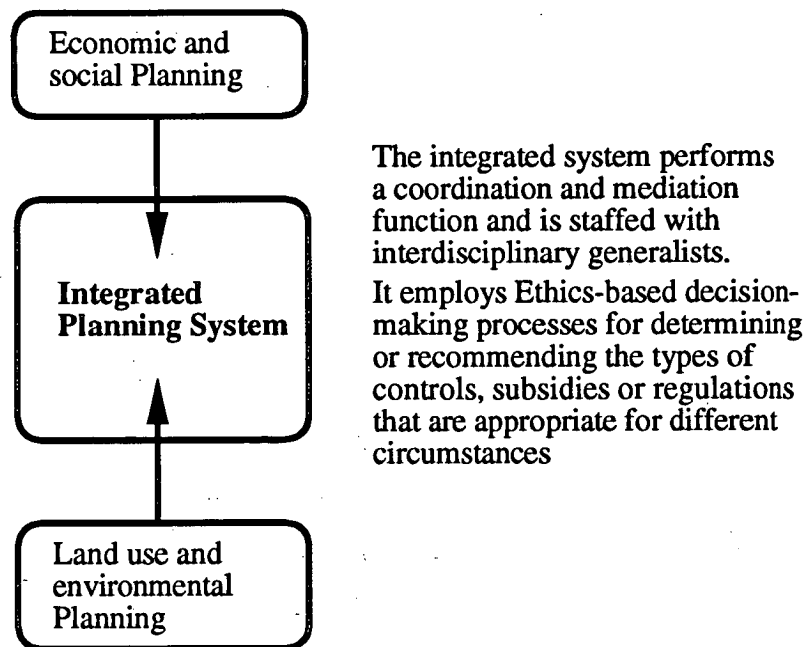


At the Structure level, however, the market is in fact composed of two major spheres: production and consumption, and the Planning sphere is composed of two corresponding separate processes: economic planning and physical planning. In the proposed model (Figure 7) the Planning system would mediate and reconcile the conflicting needs and interests of producers and consumers, and present the resulting policy advice to the decision makers. The decision makers - elected representatives and/or community groups - would depend upon the nature of the issue. This would be an open, public process, so that decision makers could be held more accountable. These decision makers would then (hopefully) select the best implementation measures from alternative recommendations rather than just policy. Under the present model, decision makers decide policy but leave implementation to the administrators and technocrats (Chapter 6). In the proposed model, implementation issues would be central. The decision making model would also be Ethics-based (Chapter 7).

**Figure 7: Recommended model of policy development**

A close up of the Planning system within this proposed structure is as shown in Figure 8 below. It suggests that economic/social and physical/ecological planning needs to be integrated, as they now operate in relative isolation with the priority in the former.

**Figure 8: The proposed integrated Planning system**



We saw above, ways in which false dualisms allow subsidies and transfers of wealth to special interests to remain unchallenged. Within the Planning system, however, the situation is reversed. Planning involves a dualistic system that is often conceived of as one. That is (following Galbraith<sup>1</sup>), there are two separate public Planning systems. On the one hand, there are the (primarily) economic planners who are involved in facilitating production and investment. These economists have become particularly influential of late. Many among their ranks are key advisers to political decision makers, which is unfortunate, as economists usually lack a lateral education. The control mechanisms they use to stimulate growth involve wealth transfers (various forms of subsidies) to production interests. As these interests exercise influence through lobbying elected representatives, we can call this the 'top down' Planning system.

What I will call the 'bottom up' Planning system is primarily composed of physical planners, whose control mechanisms involve the regulation of consumption. (It is not necessarily bottom up in the sense of participatory planning.) These planners advise officials who oversee the public service, such as Planning Commissions or Town Councils. Their powers are generally limited to prescriptive regulations, such as the particulars of building size and shape. These regulations are enacted in response to complaints and conflicts that result from the externalities of production and investment decisions, mostly in the top down Planning

<sup>1</sup> See J.K. Galbraith, 1973, *Economics and the Public Purpose* (MA: Houghton Mifflin).

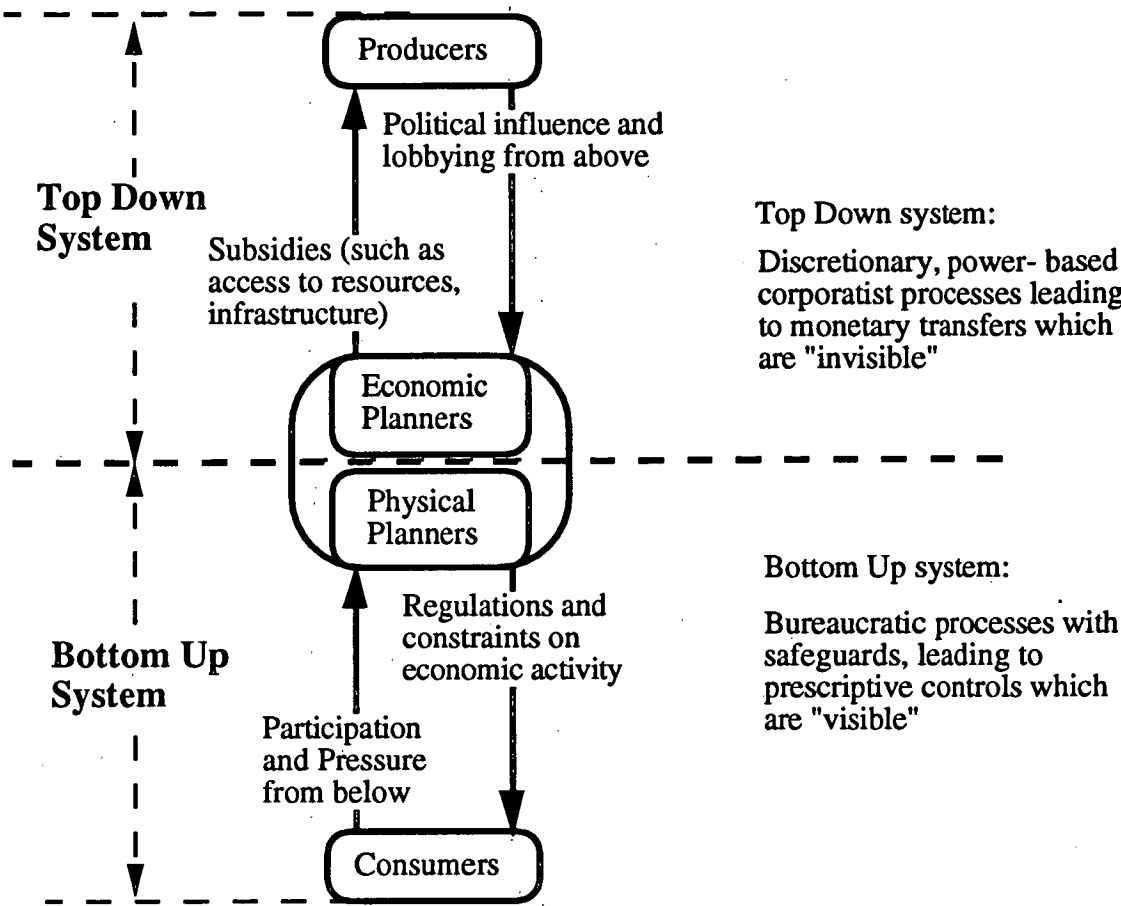
system. These planners are the visible ones because they impose constraints upon consumer choices directly, such as where and how people can build their homes or park their cars.

Economic planners, due partly to their linear, narrow education, tend to have a one-dimensional goal structure: more investment and production at any cost. Also, as they are shielded from the tangible repercussions of their actions, they can operate on the level of abstract theory. Physical planners, on the other hand, are held accountable for the impacts of decisions made by those in the production sphere. They must reconcile these 'market' trends with myriad social goals. Although physical planners are often generalists, or more broadly educated than economists, they are ill-equipped for their role, having absorbed the ideology of the economic planners (chapter 6).

The above models are only partial ones. How do the market and Planning systems interact together? The following descriptive diagram is intended to clarify the relation between the two systems. The two Planning spheres are now functionally separate, but planners in the bottom-up system are held accountable for decisions in the top down system. The two Planning spheres are now functionally separate, but planners in the bottom up system are held accountable for both. By creating the appearance of a single Planning system in juxtaposition to a single market, those in a position to determine the framework and terminology of public debate can associate the 'market' with consumers in a bottom up system, and 'planning' with producers in a top down system. This false polarity has served to create a spectre upon which producers and consumers can project the negative aspects of decisions made in the market. Thus, producers often blame Planning for bad outcomes even where there is little or no Planning of any form. Thus, the mere existence of a Planning system, though relatively ineffectual in shaping the rate or location of development, nonetheless absolves those in the market from responsibility.



Figure 9: The existing 'dual' Planning system



The new Planning system would combine the two forms of Planning into one Planning sphere (see Figure 4). In this way, subsidies and the distribution of externalities, or private development costs, could be made visible to the general public. Further, cross-subsidization of social services by income generating functions (eg. electricity production) would become possible. In this way, production could be linked to conservation.

To wrap up, I have argued for a relatively autonomous sphere that integrates economic and environmental planning. Its mandate would be to address basic needs, so economic planning would be less likely to subsume environmental planning (than is now the case). A separate sphere would, if properly designed, enable us to address the Ethical issues underlying environmental conflict, and provide a check upon power-based decision making in the market and political spheres. I have shown that the need for such a system has been obscured by the way in which we are taught to perceive the system of governance and resource allocation in general, and the Planning system itself in particular. We now turn to problems created by the design of decision-making processes and methods in the Planning system itself, the Infrastructure.

## CHAPTER 6: INFRASTRUCTURE

### Recap<sup>1</sup>

I have argued for a new Planning institution that is relatively autonomous and different in nature from the market and political spheres, through which society can prioritize basic needs. In the last chapter, I suggested that, at the structure level, this could be partially achieved by (a) integrating economic and ecological planning in keeping with democratic processes, and (b) recognizing the Ethical implications of decision-making institutions, in order that 'systemic Corruption' can be addressed. But now, in order to design the new Planning system, we need to look at the problematic features of the Planning system itself (or the Infrastructure).

Following my initial premise that social and ecological sustainability is a substantively rational goal (Chapter 1), I suggested that a Planning system should, at a minimum, contribute to three basic objectives that are essential to sustainability and well being. These are to protect and restore the life support system, to preserve cultural and biological diversity, and to prevent conflict over resources and environmental amenity. In this chapter, it is argued that the decision-making methods employed in Planning practice militate against the above objectives. This is because, I contend, Planning has yet no appropriate paradigm of its own. Planning methods (goals, decision-making norms and processes) derive from liberal economic theory, just as Planning processes derive from liberal political theory.

Since the failure of control-oriented comprehensive Planning, Planning theorists have been taking the concepts and techniques of liberal economists and superimposing them upon issues fundamentally incompatible with the underlying premises and assumptions of the economists' paradigm. That is, planners have adopted concepts that fit the preconceived solutions of mainstream economists.<sup>2</sup> I am not arguing that economic methods in limited application are the problem, but rather, their 'selective' and inappropriate application to environmental issues.

Since I began trying to articulate this problem, a growing number of green economists have moved towards explaining the inherent bias of the economic system. Hazel Henderson, Marilyn Waring, Herman Daley, Paul Ekins and many others have contributed much to public

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter is a revised version of Janis Birkeland, 1990, *The Inherent Bias of Planning Methods* (Hobart: Department of Geography and Environmental Studies: University of Tasmania).

<sup>2</sup> See Michael D. Cohen, James G. March, and Johann P. Olsen, 1972, "A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice", *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17 (March) pp. 1-25, which analyzes problem solving as a reciprocal process of matching problems with available solutions.

awareness in this area.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, it is unnecessary to replicate that material here. My point is simply that the existing Infrastructure of Planning is conceptually parallel to those of mainstream economists, when instead, we need to design methods to fit the Ethical nature of the environmental crisis.

It should be noted, of course, that the implementation of market-based controls (such as emissions trading and user pays systems) would represent a vast improvement over traditional Planning regulations. However, they are ultimately incompatible with environmental preservation. This is because, while they can create more efficiency in consumption, they only slow the rate of resource depletion. Thus Planning is inherently biased against environmental sustainability over the long term. We begin by defining decision making in Planning. In the first section, we look at decision-making norms, processes, and goals. In the following section we look at methods, techniques and regulations.

### **Types of decision making**

With regard to decision making by staff planners, there are two nominal types of decision-making processes: technocratic and quasi-judicial. In Faludi's typology (again), these could be called 'decision making' and 'decision taking' respectively.<sup>2</sup> Of course, administrative agencies generally exercise legislative, judicial, and executive functions to some extent (despite the separation of functions in the Australian Constitution, or separation of powers in the American Constitution), but the above two part distinction is more relevant to government Planning practice.

Statutory Planning or implementation is an administrative function involving delegated decision 'taking'. This is sometimes an 'executive' function, as in the case of project review processes where approvals for certain uses are permitted 'as of right' or automatically. Non-discretionary decision taking does not concern us here however. Our concern lies in cases where decision taking involves the application of policy to a specific case or quasi-judicial. Planners make determinations over private development applications in accordance with public policy as expressed in Planning legislation, codes, or directives. Where there is an impasse concerning development applications, or conflicting Planning goals or policies, it is usually reconciled 'higher up' by a Planning commission or administrator through a formal hearing

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<sup>1</sup> See Helen Henderson, 1978, *Creating Alternative Futures* (NY: Berkeley); Marilyn Waring, 1988, *Counting for Nothing: What Men Value and What Women are Worth* (London: Allen & Unwin); Herman E. Daley and John B. Cobb, jr., 1989, *above*; Paul Ekins, Mayer Hillman and Robert Hutchinson, 1992, *above*; Paul Ekins, ed., 1986, *above*.

<sup>2</sup> Andreas Faludi, 1973, *Planning Theory* (Oxford: Pergamon).

process (quasi-judicial). Because, in practice, this often entails evaluating and deciding land use conflicts after interests have vested and positions have set, this type of Planning could be characterized as 'dispute settlement' or 'conflict management'.

The second staff Planning function is advisory or 'technocratic'. It involves research and analysis preparatory to 'taking' a decision or choosing among alternatives. This includes policy analysis, where, for example, planners inform government decision making with regard to the allocation of public or environmental goods, such as land, water, air and forests. It also includes plan making (also called strategic, advance, master or comprehensive Planning) wherein planners make decisions about such things as: how to allocate land for its most appropriate use in advance of specific development proposals, balancing housing supply and demand, or providing for adequate open space, transportation, water supply and so on. In a sense, plan making is 'legislative' in nature as it involves deciding on the criteria by which future disputes or issues will be resolved. When seen in terms of the planner's function, however, it is 'technocratic' in that plans are developed and proposed by planners for consideration by Planning commissions or political decision makers (although the adoption of a Planning scheme is a legislative act).

Traditionally, Planning policy is implemented by a comprehensive plan, which is meant to provide for the efficient spatial distribution of activities and structures to meet *predicted* changes in demographic and market trends. "In order for land use controls to be effective in achieving efficient development patterns, regulations of the use of land must keep abreast of changes in the complexity of factors affecting the demand for land."<sup>1</sup> Plan making could therefore also be characterized as a 'conflict avoidance' function, in that it provides certainty to both developers and community.

These two types of decision making in Planning appear to be quite different in nature. However, these two processes, technocratic decision making (conflict avoidance) and quasi-judicial decision taking (dispute management) have similar goals, premises, and consequences. Both are designed to deal with conflict rather than its (deeper) causes. Hence, both are premised on balancing the interests, or costs and benefits, of alternative land uses. Accordingly, they lead to trade-offs and nonsustainability. The following grid suggests the discrepancy between staff decision-making norms and the actual practices:

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<sup>1</sup> James H. Carr and Edward E. Duensing, 1983, *Land Use Issues of the 1980s* (NJ: Transaction) at p. ix.

Figure 10: Decision-making norms and practices

Planning Activity	Implicit goal	Decision-making Norm (in theory)	Decision-making Practice (actual)
Project approval	Dispute settlement	Quasi Judicial	Power brokering
Master planning	Conflict avoidance	Technocratic	Predicting market

We now look at how these categories of decision making in Planning are falsely juxtaposed against private sector decision making.

Decision-making norms

A model that sets up a dichotomy between public Planning and private sector decision making leads people to believe that their respective decision rules and decision making processes differ in character. Market transactions have been characterized as ideally 'competitive', occurring through bargain and exchange by consumers. In contrast, public sector decision-making is ideally supposed to be formal and quasi-judicial. It is constrained by legislative requirements, such as community participation, freedom of information, and open meeting rules or other checks on administrative discretion. The 'New Right' would argue that the public sector is inherently authoritarian, but they are ignoring these safeguards. How do these distinctions conform to present norms or ideals (whether or not they conform in reality)?

Planning as quasi-judicial?

Let us first consider whether (discretionary) project approval processes in Planning are quasi-judicial in character; that is, where decisions interpret and apply explicit guidelines. Under the traditional quasi-judicial model, land use decisions would be made in accordance with plans, policies, or regulations which were known to all parties in advance of an application. Controls were meant to implement Planning principles and criteria and to be largely self-regulating. The role of the staff planner would merely be to judge whether the proposal met the criteria.

The controls themselves, however, were not always based on principles. Zoning for example, was largely to protect existing property owners. In fact, zoning is inherently exclusionary. Similarly, building codes are notorious for favouring particular products and impeding innovation. The recognition of the problem has led to performance standards which allow the use of any technology or product which meets the desired criteria. To an extent, of

course, the evolution of development control mechanisms has necessarily been responsive to pressure group activity (in particular, regulated parties), rather than broad Planning principles:

Land use controls are one of many cases where it is difficult to distinguish between the regulated and the regulator - industry and government. The development community and related industries which supply it have played a central role in the evolution of land regulations, both through frequent representation on planning commissions and boards and in strong leadership in promoting new styles of regulation.<sup>1</sup>

There has always been a "tension arising from a desire to lay down rational and dependable rules in advance of land development, on the one hand, and the need for leeway to respond to changing demands or to maximize the potential of individual sites, on the other".<sup>2</sup> To allow for more flexibility, negotiated agreements between development interests and Planning agencies, which bypass standard zoning provisions, have increasingly become the norm (with regional and national variations). Of course, these contractual arrangements are not necessarily inconsistent with the quasi-judicial model *if* they are carried out so as to implement Planning objectives, rather than merely accommodate special interests. For example, when I reviewed major projects for a Planning department in the 1970s, negotiations with developers were staff-controlled but nonetheless quasi-judicial in nature, as there was a complete set of written policies to guide administrative discretion. Builders and other parties had access to department policies and guidelines, and our files were open to all parties (this freedom of information policy also helped to ensure that agreements were conducted properly). Only cases incapable of resolution by staff, neighbourhood groups, and developers went before the Commission on discretionary review, at the request of any interested person (provided the Commission agreed to hear it, which it did if there was a controversy).

The problem here, however, is that both developers and adjacent property owners have learned to exploit the discretionary review process (often with a view to their own property values) by preventing, for example, home owners from making minor property improvements even where permitted by the policies, codes and guidelines.<sup>3</sup> Mediation and review processes, which were intended as a flexible and fair means of resolving conflict, have tended increasingly to be resolved through strategic manoeuvres rather than by the judicious application of general principles. As a result, the Planning process has become at once more complex and more 'flexible' (read uncertain). This has created opportunities for any planners with government work experience to open up consultancies as 'expeditors' or advocates for proponents. That is, they get paid to ferret plans through the subterranean passages of City

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Thurow and John Vranicar, 1983, "Procedural Reform of Local Land-Use Regulation", in Carr and Duensing, eds., *above* pp. 190-206, at p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> Thurow and Vranicar, 1983, *above* pp. 190-206, at p. 192.

<sup>3</sup> This is based on discussions with six planners from that department [in 1992].

Hall. The Planning arena in San Francisco is the stage for a contest in which lawyers, developers, consultants, and neighbourhood groups continually devise new rules for the project approval game.

In Tasmania, by way of contrast, decisions concerning large projects or rezonings (that is, economically significant projects) have been made collusively by politicians, rather than by Planning staff who are bound by explicit policies.<sup>1</sup> Because government-led negotiations are carried on outside the formal decision-making processes and constitutional restraints on the bureaucracy, decisions concerning major projects are not subject to procedural safeguards - at least not until an initial agreement between the government agency and the private parties is reached and positions are entrenched. In such cases, for citizens or planners to question the project would therefore be to position themselves as the adversary of the government and developers, by virtue of their mutual investment in a joint decision. Thus, a staff planner exercising his/her proper advisory function is perceived as 'taking sides' and therefore unprofessional, which is not conducive to professional advancement.

But planners' sometimes have agendas that do not reflect Planning principles. Today, it has become fashionable for planners in Australia to define their role as 'proactive' (careerist might be more apt). By proactive they do not use the term in the context of 'designing the future' as did Russell Ackoff who I believe coined the term in 1971.<sup>2</sup> Rather, they mean deciding which types of industries might be accommodated by the geographic and demographic characteristics of their jurisdiction, then initiating negotiations with those industries to woo them to nesting sites in the region. This is especially true of local government planners. 'Entrepreneurial' seems to be replacing 'quasi-judicial' as a decision-making norm to which planners aspire.<sup>3</sup> While one could argue that these local government entrepreneurs are implementing an implicit (or even explicit) growth policy, it is a process which is neither comprehensive nor designed to take into account broader environmental and social issues. Thus, it is a de facto land market, not a Planning sphere, that such planners are operating in.

Closed negotiations between developers and entrepreneurial staff may, of course, lead to the best feasible compromise concerning the siting or design of a project. However, such compromises can only lead to an optimal decision if the project itself is a good one; that is, where the proposal is the best use of the land in absolute terms. Even the best among

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<sup>1</sup> Moreover, although Planning appeals in Tasmania involve a formal hearing process, there is no comprehensive set of policies or decision rules to guide them, at State or local level. New legislation, as presently proposed, will limit third party appeals.

<sup>2</sup> Russel L. Ackoff, 1970, *A Concept of Corporate Planning* (NY: Wiley).

<sup>3</sup> These points are based on numerous personal communications, including informal interviews at the International Conference on Local Planning, sponsored by RAPI, LGPA, and AACP at Darling Harbour, Sydney (March, 1990).

competing projects or alternative designs may still represent an inappropriate land use in social or environmental terms. For example, the construction of speculative office space on undeveloped land may be less desirable than no use at all but, as a practical matter, it only needs to be the best presently proposed action (as distinct from non-action) to be approved. This means, in reality, the main principle for 'resolving conflicting interests' in the Planning arena today is actually 'first come first served'.

Negotiation and bargaining processes also undermine the quasi-judicial model's underlying norm of natural justice or due process. My point is not to suggest that quasi-judicial Planning processes are always better than informal bargaining processes. It is to suggest that there is a false perception that decisions are made in a system where due regard is given to explicit principles, or at least, sound professional judgement, a process only occasionally violated by personal forms of corruption. In fact, decisions are made in a power-based system where development of some sort will eventually prevail over preservation, despite occasional rejections, modifications, or delays to proposals in response to public opposition.

Decision taking norms in Planning have changed from the ideal of being open, quasi-judicial, and inflexible (though seldom achieved) to that of being 'entrepreneurial'. I have suggested that decision making norms do not conform to theory. It would perhaps be more accurate to say that theory often follows practice. In effect, Planning theory often seems to rationalize trends after the fact.<sup>1</sup> In the 90s, however, there is little theory which even bothers to justify the new entrepreneurial planner (as opposed to the progressive planner which Forester discusses). While Planning journals were (relatively) philosophically or socially-oriented in the 1960s, they have generally become more technical and specialized.<sup>2</sup> With the new pragmatism that has accompanied the adoption of economic jargon, philosophical or moral justification apparently now seems unnecessary.

### **Market as competitive?**

The idea that the market is competitive, even as a norm, is certainly also subject to major qualifications. While large corporations are competitive in some respects, cartels, deals and *de*

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<sup>1</sup> That is, private sector processes in Planning bureaucracies which were 'taken on board' through practical necessity, power relations or other influences, tend to be legitimized after the fact by Planning theory. In the 1970s, for example, planning literature began to promote the reform of Planning organisations by introducing the management practices of business into public Planning bureaucracies which had begun in the 1960s. Flattening the bureaucracy, proactive planning and corporate management became buzz words within Planning departments. (Dates vary, of course, depending on the locality. In Tasmania, corporate management styles only became fashionable in the 1980s.) Similarly, in the 1980s, mediation and conflict resolution literature legitimized the practice that developed in the 1970s of staff planners negotiating with developers in camera for 'concessions' (a term which reflects the true power relationship).

<sup>2</sup> Trends within the *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* constitute a case in point.



*facto* monopolies are commonplace. Corporations must expand and centralize control to compete with one another and with foreign enterprises. Buy-outs, mergers and takeovers lead to further centralization and decreased competition (and often the loss of production as assets are sold off). The resulting structure of corporate mobility, absentee ownership and centralized decision making, combined with the lack of structures for accountability, has resulted in many social costs which the state must ameliorate.<sup>1</sup> Large corporations (as a group) have a 'competitive' advantage because they do not have to pay the full social costs of their operations. The social costs of corporate capitalism include not only pollution and health costs, but the loss of community through the collapse of local institutions, the dislocation of workers, and resulting social problems.

While few still contend that the corpocracy is competitive in reality, members of the corporate sector often contend that business is competitive *but for* government regulation. If the corporate sector were indeed competitive, the present trend towards deregulation would surely create a more competitive environment. However, there is no evidence that the market is becoming more competitive, except in the sense that the weaker are killed off, leading to fewer competitors - which destroys competition. It has been suggested that deregulation does not so much represent confidence that the private sector is 'competitive' as it shows that people lack confidence in their power to control their own destiny.<sup>2</sup> Giving up on public sector decision making is giving up responsibility for society as a whole. Moreover, deregulation is a misnomer, as corporations impose their own rules on the consumer.

Perhaps the government would be more efficient *but for* the corpocracy. The growing 'bankruptcy' of the government service sector is directly related to the social costs of development generated by powerful special interests. For example, public forests on several continents continue to be sold off at below cost.<sup>3</sup> In Tasmania, at least, the Forestry Commission's A\$500 million debt has resulted neither from competitive market forces nor public Planning, but rather from power relations (or institutional Corruption). First, 'royalties' are set through closed negotiations with specific forestry companies and these royalties do not cover the real costs imposed on the Tasmanian forests or public. Second, much of the 'forestry' debt in Tasmania was incurred - not through the servicing of private forestry interests, but - through the actions of a recent pro-development government. It used the

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<sup>1</sup> Severyn T. Bruyn and James Meehan, 1987, *Beyond the Market and the State: New Directions in Community Development* (PA: Temple University Press) at pp. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Sheldon S. Wolin, 1988, "Collective Identity and Constitutional Power", in Gary C. Bryner and Dennis L. Thompson, eds., *The Constitution and the Regulation of Society* (Salt Lake, UT: Brigham Young University) pp. 93-122.

<sup>3</sup> Robert C. Repetto, 1988, *The Forest for the Trees?: Government Policies and the Misuse of Forest Resources* (Wash. D.C.: World Resources Institute).

Forestry Commission, a statutory authority, to borrow money in order to circumvent ceilings on borrowing imposed by the Loans Council. It is thus more than ironic that the bankruptcy of government services is one of the main pressures on governments to privatise, sell off assets and deregulate. Privatization creates bonanzas for special interests as they are spared all the development and infrastructure costs, while paying only the present recessionary value of public facilities and resources. Some have gone beyond the claim that the corporate state is or should be competitive. They are now glorifying the corporate hierarchical structure (as we discuss in Chapter 11).

In summary, 'competitive markets' and 'quasi-judicial' Planning processes do not represent a valid dichotomy. The association of the market sphere with 'competition' and the Planning sphere with 'quasi-judicial' decision-making processes is no longer even accurate as ideals. As we have seen, on the one hand, many staff planners are pleased to serve development interests as facilitators or entrepreneurs in the land market. (In effect, these planners also make policy, which would be 'Corruption' in the quasi-judicial model.) On the other hand, corporations externalize the social costs of their activities and receive many other kinds of subsidies and this is being rationalized as appropriate. If the dichotomy is real but bad, then the take-over by the private sector must therefore be good.

### Organizational norms

Closely related to the above competitive/quasi-judicial dichotomy is the idea that public sector organizations are 'bureaucratic', 'hierarchical', and impersonal, while the market sector is 'decentralized', and promotes management 'efficiency'. These word associations still persist even though people realize that firms in the market are becoming ever more centralized and impersonal, if not pyramidal. Distant corporate boards make decisions, such as to move firms or import workers, which devastate local economies and communities that they have never seen. Outside investors and managers are often indifferent to local welfare as their aim is to remove wealth. Local elites also place personal economic interests above those of the residents in the service of elites located outside the area.<sup>1</sup> Local residents become dependent on decisions made elsewhere by people not committed to the locality.

State Planning has been conceived of as command and control, by analogy to the now demised Eastern Bloc countries. However, as Sheldon Wolin points out, business organizations are in fact structures of control and discipline, often every bit as hierarchical as a centralized state bureaucracy.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, corporations are now beginning to take over many

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<sup>1</sup> R. Matthews, 1983, *The Creation of a Regional Dependency* (Ontario: University of Toronto Press).

<sup>2</sup> Wolin, 1988, *above* at p. 116.

of the social control functions of the state (such as prisons). The institutions of the private realm are increasingly "deemed capable not only of taking over functions previously thought to be the unique preserve of the state but of appearing to favour functions - such as schools, prisons, and hospitals - that are particularly coercive/disciplinary".<sup>1</sup> This ominous trend is even now occurring on an international as well as on a domestic level. For example, private sector groups in the United States have set up private armies to overthrow governments with which the United States has formal diplomatic relations.<sup>2</sup>

In contrast, Planning bureaucracies, in some places at least, are increasingly less hierarchical. For decades, Planning schools have encouraged interdisciplinary team problem-solving approaches, and this has gradually infiltrated into government bureaucracies. Also, if only because of the many different tasks that Planning and pollution control agencies face, many planning organizations are composed of small divisions that are horizontally structured. This is not to suggest that Planning agencies are not bureaucratic; however, I would dispute the idea that they are necessarily more bureaucratic and unaccountable than large private firms.

While the private sector appears more efficient, it is arguable whether large firms are in fact more efficient than government agencies. First, as we have seen, corporations have appeared more efficient than they really are because they have been able to externalize their social costs. Public sector bureaucracies, in contrast, have appeared less cost effective than they really are. This is partly because they subsidize development, the beneficiaries of which keep the profits, not the agency. If pollution control agencies were credited with the costs they saved the public by preventing pollution it would improve their apparent efficiency. And, it should be remembered that such studies evaluate the monetary cost equivalences alone, which, even when allowing for health and longevity costs, ignore such considerations as the reduction in life quality and scope of public choice. Whether inefficiencies in the market are passed on in higher prices or in higher taxes, the bureaucracy bears the blame, as an 'invisible hand' cannot be held accountable.

Second, there is no proof that government agencies are less efficient. In contrast to business, government agencies have multiple goals. They have myriad social considerations to account for, which often conflict with one another, while business just looks at the bottom line. Charles Goodsell argues that when such incommensurables are allowed for, and relevant measurements are used, government bureaucracies (in the United States at least) are as efficient

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<sup>1</sup> Wolin, 1988, *above* at p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Wolin, 1988, *above* at p. 114.

as corporations.<sup>1</sup> The argument against the idea of Planning has really been over *whose* goals it is serving.

Also, there are no adequate grounds for comparing business and government efficiency as public sector bureaucracies have not been analyzed as economic organizations. P.M. Jackson shows that the political economies of both large corporations and large bureaucracies are very similar.<sup>2</sup> Waste and wide discretionary power, the two problems associated with bureaucracy, arguably exist to the same extent in large corporations.<sup>3</sup>

## Organizational goals

Although government has had to contend with many conflicting goals, it has tried to meet these goals through cost efficiency and control - just as business does. Planning undertaken on behalf of either large corporations or a central communist state has traditionally had one predominant strategy - *control* over resources and the environment. This control (or power over prices, consumers, suppliers, community, and state) has been achieved through vertical integration, horizontal expansion, economic blackmail, and indoctrination through the mass media. Control is achieved by means of growth and growth is achieved by means of control.

In effect, then, growth has become a universal 'solution' to social problems; an overarching policy in both Planning and market sectors. When the spillover effects of growth create social injustice or inequity, the solution is assumed to be more growth, the benefits of which will theoretically 'trickle down' to the victims of earlier spillovers. Then, when industrial growth creates environmental problems, the solution is assumed to be greater efficiency to achieve growth with less social cost. For example, The highly acclaimed 1987 Brundtland Report<sup>4</sup> - although it links poverty and environmental problems to the economic system itself - proceeds to call for more efficiency (less waste) and increased growth as measured by GNP.<sup>5</sup> Like so many 'progressive' documents, it was premised on the assumption that we can continue to divide up land and resources as long as we do so more equitably and efficiently.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles I. Goodsell, 1983, *The Case of Bureaucracy: A Public Administration Polemic*, 2nd ed. (NJ: Chatham House).

<sup>2</sup> P.M. Jackson, 1982, *The Political Economy of Bureaucracy* (Oxford: Philip Allan Publishers).

<sup>3</sup> In fact, the most hierarchical, 'bureaucratic', and wasteful organizations I worked for were two large businesses.

<sup>4</sup> The "Brundtland Report" has been published as the World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, *Our Common Future* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

<sup>5</sup> *The Brundtland Report*, above at p. 50.

The *Brundtland Report* also assumed that we can somehow solve the little hiccups in our economic order with technology before we reach some nebulous limit. For example:

The accumulation of knowledge and the development of technology can enhance the carrying capacity of the resource base. But ultimate limits there are, and sustainability requires that long before these are reached, the world must ensure equitable access to the constrained resource and reorient technological efforts to relieve the pressure.<sup>1</sup>

This suggests that we consume more land and resources while waiting for someone to irrefutably determine the scientific 'limits of growth' - yet we may have already exceeded the carrying capacity of the planet.<sup>2</sup> Even were such 'brinksmanship' a rational policy, this limit cannot be ascertained 'scientifically' because it involves Ethical considerations, such as whether we exterminate fellow species and ecosystems and how we as a society should live. To be 'Ethical', such important decisions cannot be made by 'non-decision', as is currently the case.

Planning texts from the eastern bloc have also argued for conservation through more efficient development, as if wilderness and natural ecosystems were of endless supply.<sup>3</sup> As Paul Ekins points out, growth does not in fact equal welfare. Growth "begs three vital questions: growth of what? growth for whom? growth with what side-effects?"<sup>4</sup> In a framework whose superordinate goal is growth, broadening the scope of public participation means very little in relation to the third (environmental) dimension. The idea of freedom and choice is specious in a society where the basic Ethical questions about how we should live are not open to public debate (as discussed in Chapter 5). The invisible hand belongs to powerful producers and uninformed consumers, blinded to the long-term social and environmental implications of their behaviour.

## Implications

I have questioned the association of Planning with: (a) quasi-judicial decision making as opposed to the competitive bargain and exchange of the market, (b) a hierarchical bureaucracy as opposed to the managerial efficiency of the private sector, and (c) empire building, lack of accountability and growth for the sake of growth, as opposed to the dispersed power and choice of the market, or, more generally, domination versus freedom. In so doing, I have tried to dispel the myth that the public and private sectors are dichotomous in organizational and procedural norms and practices. But what is the effect of this false polarity?

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<sup>1</sup> *The Brundtland Report*, above at p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Many have argued this. See for example, William R. Catton, jr., 1980, *Overshoot: The Ecological Basis of Revolutionary Change* (IL: University of Illinois Press)

<sup>3</sup> See A. D. Ursul, 1983, *Philosophy and the Problems of Civilization*, trans. by H. Campbell Creighton (Moscow: Progress Publishers).

<sup>4</sup> Paul Ekins, 1986, "The Need for a New Economics", in Paul Ekins, ed., above at p. 8.

One important effect is this: the public versus private dichotomy of the conventional resource allocation model creates the notion that the relationship between the public and private sector is *zero sum*. This is, of course, untrue: a larger sphere of public sector budget making does not necessarily mean less private sector activity.<sup>1</sup> James O'Connor has explained how the growth of state and monopoly sectors is a single process: "the growth of the state is both a cause and effect of the expansion of monopoly capital".<sup>2</sup> Further, a greater amount of government regulation does not decrease total consumption and production in the private sector. This depends more upon what money is invested in. Economic activity is a function of natural resources, labour, capital, and brains. While these may be limited, we will never run out of work to do, so unemployment is not necessary (as the Japanese demonstrated). Qualitative development can continue indefinitely, although material growth cannot.

The issue, then, is only what kind of work we wish to pay for. When resources, labour, and capital are exhausted into weaponry they are not being used to meet basic needs, wants or rights. In terms of the economy, paying people to lean on shovels can be a better investment than military 'white elephants'. But the general public is excluded from these decisions; military spending is not brought to a vote, nor subject to 'opportunity cost' comparisons. Similarly, while we may all want, say, private cars, we are not able to compare what sort of world we could be living in had we created jobs producing other things (and not needed to commute so far to escape the unpleasantness of car-infested urban areas). Public Planning alone can do these sorts of advance projections in order to *create social choices*. In contrast, private interests can only look at predictions and opportunities for investment, which cut off social choices. Planning can also result in more market activity and promote more competition by, for example, reducing monopolies and redirecting spending into productive (less inflationary), job-creating civilian uses.

### Decision-making concepts

It has been argued that there has been a merger of decision-making and organizational norms and goals which belies the idea of an irrevocable and zero sum conflict between private business and public planning. We now discuss the merger of Planning and business methodology. At the most basic level, Planning has generally been conceived in the literature as the process of evaluating and selecting alternative land uses. Planning methods are designed to help us 'choose' among the best present use values of land and resources (as proposed by vested interests), by 'balancing' private rights and claims to these environmental goods. We

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<sup>1</sup> Jan-Eric Lane, 1985, *State and Market: The Politics of the Public and the Private* (CA: Sage).

<sup>2</sup> James O'Connor, 1973, *The Fiscal Crisis and the State* (NY: St. Martin's Press) at p. 8.

now discuss why these two concepts each tend to limit the range of public choice, and are incompatible with sustainability.

First, the implicit *purpose* of our decision-making methods is to 'choose' among land and resource uses. We try to choose now, from presently known options, what is best for the future. This approach can be logically linked to Rationalism in Planning which, as we saw, concerns itself with designing techniques for framing decisions. A result of Rationalism, and the phenomenon of 'economic creep' generally, Planning practice has, in a sense, merged with contemporary policy analysis.<sup>1</sup> It has become concerned with predicting, weighing, modelling, choosing and monitoring, rather than with resolving such fundamental Ethical issues as what constitutes progress, or how to determine and achieve a better quality of life.

The implicit *criterion* for decision making is that of balancing individual or group interests in land and resource use to achieve the so-called 'balance between conservation and development'. This is largely traceable to Pluralist ideology, which is concerned with processes for settling disputes over conflicting preferences (as opposed to resolving the Ethical dilemmas that underlay them). Given a Pluralist framework, such a 'balance' is generally achieved through an incremental decision-making process, weighing of costs and benefits of individual proposals and obtaining 'concessions' from developers. Again, in practice, this must lead eventually to balancing off the public estate through the incremental divestiture and degradation of land and resources.

We look first at problems with existing decision-making concepts and methods and development control techniques. Then we examine the assumptions that support them.

### Choosing

In both Rationalist and Pluralist orientations, problem solving is seen as finding means for choosing among strategies, counterplans, methods of implementation and so forth. The various definitions of Planning are often synonymous with procedural rationality itself, which seeks to choose the most efficient means to a *given* end. As a representative example, a United Nations study defines the process of land use Planning as:

the process of *evaluating* land and alternative patterns of land use and other physical, social and economic conditions for the purpose of *selecting* and adopting the kinds of land use and courses of action best calculated to achieve *specified objectives*.<sup>2</sup> (italics added)

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<sup>1</sup> See R. Alterman and D. Macrae, Jr., 1983, "Planning and Policy Analysis, Converging or Diverging Trends?", *American Institute of Planners Journal* 49 (Spring) pp. 200-215, which attempts to distinguish planning and policy analysis. See also Dennis A. Rondelli, 1973, "Urban Planning as Policy Analysis: Management of Urban Change", *Journal of American Institute of Planners* 39 (January) pp. 13-22.

<sup>2</sup> Gregory K. Wilkinson, 1985, *The Role of Legislation in Land Use Planning for Developing countries* (Rome: FAO).

This definition also reflects an instrumentalist ethic and latent goal of 'progress'. While an articulated goal of planning may be to provide for human welfare, welfare (as we saw earlier) has been equated with progress, which is believed to be achieved through growth.

Consequently, the purpose of planning becomes to choose the optimum present *use* of land, which, given the association of welfare and growth, will seldom be the 'no use' option. Often, however, the best present use for a particular site may change the ecosystem for all time, cut off future choices, and hence reduce our chances of adapting to environmental change. The distinction between 'prevention' and 'choosing among alternatives' is not semantic: if we only have methodologies for choosing among alternative land uses, a hidden imperative to *use* land is created regardless of the value system we adopt. Because it centres on choosing, the present conceptual framework does not encourage us to think in terms of *keeping options open* or *preventing* problems.

In a series of decisions, developments will eventually prevail over the no-development option. Greens must continually fight the same battles until they lose. While convicted criminals in some jurisdictions are immune from double-jeopardy, the environment never is. The defence of nature is therefore very expensive because it will be threatened over and over again - and its defence is undertaken by (mostly poor) volunteers. While greens must often fund their own activism or raise funds for their campaigns, corporate interests have stockholders funds to spend, and government developers can spend taxpayers funds.

This tendency towards closing off future options also holds true whether we have incremental or comprehensive decision-making strategies. Even 'comprehensive planning' is, in fact, undertaken in an incremental manner. The development of comprehensive zoning schemes and master plans really involves choosing among potential uses for land, just as does the evaluation of project impacts to decide on permit approvals or design conditions for mitigating those impacts.

Furthermore, planning processes are structured to respond to and select from *private* market initiatives. In lieu of planning for the future, *given* alternatives are, at best, selected and assessed by a technical staff using methods that are biased toward the development of land, such as cost-benefit analysis (discussed below). As development of some sort will eventually prevail, planners end up bargaining with the developer to get the *best* development on the immediate horizon. This is the case even if planners apply strategies designed to balance the stakeholders' relative power.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Forester, 1989, *above*.



Some green economists have suggested setting up a trust fund to compensate future generations for present damage.<sup>1</sup> However, tacking on a price (or tax) to cover the value of keeping options open will not alter the fact that options have been lost forever. Looked at from an Ethical basis, it is like one neighbour destroying the use of another's home and garden, but deciding unilaterally: (a) that there is a monetary equivalent to the environmental damage and (b) what that damage is worth, according to his own value system. The neighbour has no say at all.

### Incrementalism

As we saw in Chapter 2, Pluralism provided the theoretical rationalization for this incremental bargaining approach in Planning practice.<sup>2</sup> With the social turbulence of the 1960s, planners in the United States had become self-conscious about their inability to implement 'comprehensive' plans and programs. Incrementalism seemed to conform to actual patterns of coping among decision makers - making decisions as little and late as possible, or "muddling through".<sup>3</sup> Incremental decision making is supposed to minimize the risk of big mistakes and to be versatile; that is, small steps allow for marginal and tentative adjustments to be made in direction or approach. In many contexts, of course, this is a rational way of coping with the uncertainty of modernity where, for example, unexpected technological or political change can nullify a long range plan. Incrementalism was therefore accepted as both a natural and pragmatic approach to planning.

In a 'frontier' of endless resources, incrementalism is indeed a reasonable planning strategy. However, with regard to land use decisions in a finite world it is, paradoxically, very *risky*. A process designed for making marginal, incremental choices works only *if* the basic direction and institutional structures are appropriate. Incremental adjustments cannot change direction or momentum; "one cannot cross a giant chasm in small steps".<sup>4</sup> Preparing for a safe, secure future would require living in harmony with nature and in harmony among ourselves - which represents a radical and systemic change of direction. The validity of the incrementalist strategy, therefore, depends on the *type of problem* being addressed.

Incrementalism is especially problematic when applied to the allocation of environmental goods. For example, a system which is set up to review, on a case-by-case basis, development

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Ekins, Mayer Hillman and Robert Hutchinson, 1992, *above* at p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> C.E. Lindblom, 1965, *The Intelligence of Democracy: Decision Making through Mutual Adjustment* (NY: Free Press). Lindblom saw bargaining as the central feature of democratic decision making, but placed the incremental approach in a broader Rationalist paradigm.

<sup>3</sup> A term introduced by C.E. Lindblom, 1959, "The Science of Muddling Through", *Public Administration Review* 19 (Spring) pp. 79-88.

<sup>4</sup> A saying attributed to Lloyd George.

applications or resource acquisitions, such as timber or mining leases, tends to obscure the cumulative social and environmental effects of these resource transfers. The case-by-case decision-making approach is therefore incompatible with the concept of 'sustainability', let alone the other basic precepts of systems theory and ecology. It is, after all, nonsense to speak of 'sustainability' on any given plot of, say, agricultural land, with an accelerating human population rate juxtaposed with an accelerating species extinction rate. A 'cancer' on one part of the body is a cancer of the whole system. The cumulative effect over the long term is the allocation of land and environmental goods to private consumption and thus the elimination of future public options. Incremental planning, therefore, merely postpones and exacerbates conflict over resources.

Over time these incremental choices form a 'decision tree', and we are going further and further out on a limb. At each branch, Planning decisions are rational, but taken as a whole they are not, most dramatically evidenced by the increasing possibility of the collapse of planetary life support systems. It is not that the individual decisions are necessarily wrong, but that the framework for decision making is inappropriate in a world of finite land and space. To use an analogy, drug addicts and criminals do not get up one morning and decide "I believe I shall now commence a life of crime"; rather, they do so *incrementally* in a series of market-based choices which seem to maximize their self-interest, by balancing the costs and benefits of foreseeable alternatives. In this sense, the individual criminal is rational, but over time he gets caught up in a kind of momentum which cuts off any meaningful life choices.

### Predicting

Contrary to the general perception, comprehensive planning, as well as being incremental, is also market-based. In practice, master plans in Western liberal democracies rely upon *predictions* of demand, tempered by geographical and other constraints. This usually just means allowing for market trends on coloured maps, based on the profit-maximizing potential of the land.<sup>1</sup> Of course, prediction is a key part of the methodology of science and makes sense in that context. For instance, the prediction of earthquakes can lead to better building design and locational decisions or preparedness for the unavoidable. However, 'predictions' of social change are really 'projections' of consumer trends, not analyses of the reciprocal dynamics of social causes and effects.<sup>2</sup>

If much of physical as well as economic planning involves predicting the market, one could not expect planners to perform better than market analysts, whose failure in recent years is

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<sup>1</sup> Hamid Shirvani, 1983, "Retrieving the Environmental-Based Physical Development Plan", *U.D. Review* 6 (4) pp. 19-22.

<sup>2</sup> H.J. McCloskey, 1983, *Ecological Ethics and Politics* (NJ: Rowman and Littlefield) pp. 11-25 distinguishes prediction and projection.

almost legendary. If we have learned anything from market analysis, it is that predictions themselves influence the market. Currently, however, these predictions are made public by those who have a vested interest in the direction the market takes. There are, for example, individuals and interests in a position to buy vast amounts of stocks in, say, mining resources, and then predict a boom in the resource or mining industries. When stocks go up they sell off theirs. In the meantime, however, communities have invested vast time, energy and money planning for this eventuality, 'counting their chickens'.

Further, while there is certainly some value in both predictions and projections, we often use these methodologies, not to *prevent* catastrophes, but merely to *mitigate* their effects. For example, where floods can be predicted, flood barriers are often built in lieu of flood plain zoning - to accommodate demand for housing. But these can actually increase flood impacts. Similarly, because of the professional investment in methods to anticipate and measure consequences, we develop cures for consequences, rather than prevention. For example, environmental 'controls' treat wastes at the wrong end of the pipe, stack or vent. Despite mitigation measures, the pollution is filtered or dispersed - it all gets into the environment eventually. Thus, scrubbers absorb toxic air emissions which are later flushed into the water system, and land fills, even when lined with clay or rock beds, eventually leak (as people in the central United States, where the ground water is now contaminated, have learned). Once ecosystems are shattered for their resources or infiltrated with toxics, they are never the same again. In short, *prevention* is the only cure.

Prevention means changing not only consumption patterns, but industrial processes and products themselves. A case in point would be the use of hemp instead of timber to make paper. But were such basic investment decisions to be a matter of considered public choice, a major overhaul of Planning processes and methods would be required.

### Seeking control

The underlying fallacy of prediction is that it seeks 'certainty' in an uncertain world. Society is a 'chaotic' system and any variation, such as a technological innovation or political event, can affect the entire system.<sup>1</sup> An important lesson to be learned from chaos theory<sup>2</sup> is that, because we do not have the knowledge and wisdom to comprehend the complex ecological and social ramifications of new technologies, we should make *no* irreversible choices regarding undeveloped land, and instead should invest in restoring life support systems.<sup>3</sup> Instead, typical

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<sup>1</sup> Mothers, of course, have experienced chaos in childraising, but it was not recognized in science until Mankind developed formulas that could begin to encapsulate it.

<sup>2</sup> James Gleick, 1988, *Chaos: Making a New Science* (London: Heinemann).

<sup>3</sup> See generally Paul B. Thompson, 1986, "Uncertainty Arguments in Environmental Issues", *Environmental Ethics* 8 (1) pp. 59-75.

responses to the new theory of chaos have been an intensification of attempts to better control nature. 'Pure' research is not free from either the projections of the observer, or the instrumental uses of the results of the research by others. Thus, while the recent interest in the science of chaos will change Man's terminology, it will not automatically affect His means of problem solving - trying to control, monitor and measure the unknowable and uncontrollable.

A frequently heard complaint against comprehensive planning is that we 'cannot change our rigid, inflexible master plans and regulations fast enough when social or market forces change'. But what we call 'social' forces are usually the side-effects of economic determinism. (The use of the word 'forces' is also instructive: it is a term of physics - as if the capital accumulation process were an act of God, manifesting in scientific laws.) Physical planning, in practice, means figuring out how to best engineer people to fit what we call technological or economic imperatives, phrases which imply that these imperatives are not Man-made. In other words, there is a tendency to change (genetically or culturally-encoded) human needs and relationships to find solutions to our Man-made problems, such as our blind faith in the market and technology.

In short, comprehensive planning has often meant trying to control nature and people to better serve the needs of the market at the expense of the ecosystem. It is not 'comprehensive' in the sense of holistic. Quite the contrary, it ignores the 'whole' and confines public choice to narrow parameters set by development interests.

## Balancing

Comprehensive and incremental planning merge in policy writing. When planners write of *comprehensive* policies by which future land use planning decisions should be made, they can usually be paraphrased as "mitigating the bad and enhancing the good", which epitomizes the *incrementalist* approach. (In fact, this was the motto of a planning agency where I once worked). This cliché reflects the fact that public sector planners walk a picket fence between community and development sectors. A delegation of visiting planners from the former U.S.S.R. once concurred with me in this - only they said they had to tiptoe between the community and government developers instead.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps this is why planners so often speak of the need for more 'coordinated' and 'balanced' decision making.

As stated above, the criterion for choosing between different land and resource uses is 'balance': balancing interests or balancing costs and benefits. However, to use 'balancing' processes and formulas in making decisions does not mean that the *outcome* will be balanced. What we are really doing is dividing up and distributing the environment in a manner which minimizes immediate overt conflict through environmental 'porkbarreling' on a grand scale.

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<sup>1</sup> Discussions held with Russian planners visiting the Department where I worked in (circa) 1977.

Politicians and developers seem to appreciate this fact because they frequently assert that we need *more* balance.

Egalitarianism, which underlies this criterion, is an important value, and quite appropriate for inter-human issues, but it is inadequate as a Planning paradigm, because it is concerned only with two dimensions. The idea that egalitarianism can extend to animals and nature is certainly not objectionable, but from a practical stand point it is unhelpful. This is because the rights of animals will never be balanced equally with the rights of humans, even in a dramatically more aware and less anthropocentric culture (one's own children will never be sacrificed for the sake of an entire species, for instance, which is hardly balanced or egalitarian)

Moreover, there can be no scientific formula for 'balancing conservation and development' as it involves Ethics. To achieve a state of ecological sustainability, a 'balanced' end state would probably require *reverse* growth and a reduction of population (hopefully voluntarily). This could not be achieved through a balancing process. A master plan that purports to achieve sustainability by accommodating an increased human population and 'balance between conservation and development' is only wasting taxpayer's money (and fiddling while Rome burns). The crucial issues, such as whether an increased population is ecologically sustainable have been left to non-decision through the incremental actions of profiteers, politicians and technocrats, all of whom are trained to pass on the long-term costs of development.

The arguments against truly 'comprehensive' (or ecological) planning, are based on the Patriarchal forms of Planning attempted in the past - often with allusion to centralized, 'draconian' regimes such as those of the Eastern Bloc nations. Yet comprehensive planning need not be either technocratic and authoritarian, or incremental and market-based. New methods can be devised to inform public choice and promote community debate on substantive planning issues (Chapter 7). Having looked at the bias created by concepts underlying Planning methods, let us now look more specifically at how present planning techniques create a penchancy toward the transfer of public resources to development interests and are hence non-sustainable.

## Techniques

### Decision analysis

There are many types of decision-analysis techniques. The better known are cost-benefit and risk-benefit analysis. Cost-benefit analysis (CBA) came into use as early as the 1930s, but

was criticized for its limitations regarding the 'weighing in' of non-material values.<sup>1</sup> In the 1970s, new attempts were made to integrate values into decision analysis techniques. Space does not allow an exposition of the many incongruities of these decision tools and this topic has already been explored by various authors.<sup>2</sup> For present purposes, two arguments should suffice. First, I have already argued that these decision techniques encapsulate the broader approach of modern liberal society toward social and environmental policy making in general (choosing and balancing). Second, as I now argue, these techniques and their philosophical underpinnings serve to reinforce existing power relationships in resource allocation decisions.

Of course, it must be said that cost-benefit analyses are not intended nor designed to determine social goals or policy. They are evaluative tools at best. They can help us to choose among alternative proposals by, in effect, 'balancing' two sides of an equation. These techniques are appropriate to aid a developer in determining the feasibility of pursuing a given project. However, planners have adapted them for the purpose of determining whether a project should be approved by the public. Furthermore, by default, these techniques now serve to determine what kind of future we should create for ourselves.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, fast becoming the 'bread and butter' of many planners, was patterned on cost-benefit analysis. The EIA process was designed to improve decision-making rationality by forcing the consideration of a wider range of social and natural impacts, and alternative land and resource uses.<sup>3</sup> However, it is almost exclusively used to evaluate choices as defined by proponents, or vested (corporate or government) development interests. In Tasmania, as in most jurisdictions, EIAs are prepared by consultants who are paid by, and answerable only to, the project sponsors. In the Third World, the writers of CBAs are sometimes employees of large international construction companies who stand to gain from lucrative construction contracts. Moreover, in real life, EIAs usually serve as promotional documents designed to justify government and industry plans.<sup>4</sup>

Not only do EIAs put the basic decisions before the study, but they also impede our ability to find the best use of public investment capital. For example, more jobs might be created by assisting small business enterprises than by borrowing to build a dam; however, analysts

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<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Flood Control Act of 1936 required benefits to exceed costs of dams and other water resource developments constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

<sup>2</sup> See Michael Clark and John Herington, 1988, *The Role of Environmental Impact Assessment in the Planning Process* (London: Mansell). For a critical review of cost-benefit analysis generally see Daniel Swartzman, Richard A. Liroff, and Kevin G. Croke, 1982, *Cost-Benefit Analysis and Environmental Regulations: Politics, Ethics, and Methods* (Wash. D.C.: The Conservation Foundation).

<sup>3</sup> See Serge Taylor, 1984, *Making Bureaucrats Think* (CA: Stanford University Press).

<sup>4</sup> For example, see the EIAs for the Export Woodchip and Wesley Vale Pulp Mill in Tasmania. They appear to make no effort to disguise their promotional intent.

frame the issue as whether or not to build a dam. The EIA, then, focuses on that narrow question, despite the requirement of presenting alternatives. Of course, dam construction appears to create more jobs than the 'no dam' alternative simply because the question is framed to disregard the relative cost of the jobs created, the nature of the work, the social displacement entailed by a short-term construction project in a remote area, and alternative ways of creating jobs. More fundamentally, these studies do not enable us to examine the public value of the industry itself in relation to, say, alternative decentralized energy structures. Thus, EIAs tend to confine debate to a narrow range of alternative actions presented by their proponents. Merely by asking the wrong questions, these decision analysis techniques favour their proponents, the development interests.

In addition, it is widely recognized that what often passes for a cost-benefit analysis or EIA usually excludes many social costs, such as pollution, medical bills, lost options, cleanup costs, and so forth.<sup>1</sup> For instance, cost-benefit analyses for nuclear plants have not included the costs and risks of insuring or decommissioning nuclear plants. Consequently, these costs have been left for taxpayers, investors and consumers to worry about, which amounts to over 50 million to 3 billion per plant.<sup>2</sup> As well as ignoring costs, decision analysts often ignore the indirect subsidies and *pre-existing* benefits the developer receives from the community at large that make the project likely to be profitable in the first place. These include the existing infrastructure of roads, grants, tax shelters, and cheap loans.

Similarly, these studies do not take into account the fact that land distribution and values are based, not on labour, but on power.

A man with much property has great bargaining strength and a great sense of security, independence and freedom; and he enjoys these things not only vis-a-vis his property-less fellow citizens but also vis-a-vis the public authorities. An unequal distribution of property means an unequal distribution of power and status.<sup>3</sup>

The profits from land and development are no longer proportional to the time or energy expended on the land, as they were when John Locke propounded his seminal theory.<sup>4</sup> This again biases the outcome of these analyses toward the existing distribution of wealth as it is, in a sense, investment capital, more than labour, which generates income ('it takes money to

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the 'cost-benefit study' of a controversial hydro-electric dam in Tasmania only considered benefits. See H.J. Saddler, Bennett, I. Reynolds, and B. Smith, 1981, *Public Choice in Tasmania* (Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, ANU, Canberra) and A. Kellow, 1983, "Public Project Evaluation in an Australian State: Tasmania's Dam Controversy" *The Australian Quarterly* 55 (3) (Spring) pp. 263-277.

<sup>2</sup> Lester Brown, 1986, *State of the World 1986* (Wash. D. C.: World Watch Institute).

<sup>3</sup> J.E. Meade, 1964, *Efficiency, Equality and the Ownership of Property* (London: Allen and Unwin) p. 38.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion on John Locke's theory of property, see Herman E. Daley and John B. Cobb, jr., 1989, *above* at p. 109.

make money'). It should instead be recognized that land values now derive from the community, that is, resources, labour, and economic activity that are largely external to the site.

Peter Junger illustrates clearly how the outcome of cost-benefit analysis will be a function of the existing distribution of wealth in society.<sup>1</sup> One example he uses is the Aswan High Dam, which required the relocation of 90 thousand fellahin and nomads. Had they had enough power or 'nous' to require compensation to move, the opportunity cost of relocating them would have equalled the amount they would have paid to be left alone. Had they been rich, however, the cost of relocation could have been greater than all the benefits produced by the dam, and the cost-benefit analysis would have therefore invalidated the project.<sup>2</sup> In a more recent example, the Three Gorges Dam in China will require 1.7 million people to be moved. It would not be feasible to move 1.7 million people in, say, California because they have more material possessions (so much for egalitarianism).

These economistic decision-making techniques are also biased against preserving and expanding future social options. For example, if we use 'present value' analyses for choosing among alternative land uses, a hidden imperative is created to use land at the highest present use, regardless of the particular discount rate used. And, as noted earlier, while the 'do nothing' alternative is always one choice, it will seldom outweigh development proposals in *ad hoc* decision making and a cost-benefit analysis favouring non-action will have to be defended every time a development is proposed, or the public coffers run low, thereby changing the relative costs and benefits.

In sum, those decision-making tools are predicated on the false metaphor of balancing interests when we are really "balancing off" the public estate in response to pressures to placate producer and consumer demands and to contain conflict over resources. From a long-term perspective, decision-making techniques favour development and the existing distribution of power, and they tend to incrementally reduce future options - especially when land and resources are alienated to centralized, powerful interests. This is not to say that cost-benefit analysis is not a useful aid to decision making, but it is only appropriate for making choices among given proposals usually based on a narrow conception of monetary *efficiency* (or preferences, below). There is nothing sacrosanct about the concept of efficiency that underlies Planning methodology. It was not arrived at democratically. The selection of cost efficiency rather than, say, public health, as the superordinate goal or measure of social welfare, has not been explicitly voted upon, nor is it to be found in any Constitution (to my knowledge):

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<sup>1</sup> Peter D. Junger, 1979, "The Inapplicability of Cost-benefit Analysis to Environmental Policies", *Ekistics* 276 pp. 184-194.

<sup>2</sup> Peter D. Junger, 1979, *above* at p. 188.



Is there really no alternative to the concept of 'balancing the good and the bad', upon which our complex methodologies are designed? If we must 'balance' something, why not consider other things. For example: (a) Are the developers gaining more from society than they are contributing? (b) Does the energy used in extracting and converting resources (in, say, energy facilities and agricultural production) exceed that produced in the process? (c) Can crops be grown within the land's sustainable limits of soil, water, and nutrients, or, are we giving back something to the land in return for what it gives us?<sup>1</sup> (d) If previously undeveloped land is required for a necessary structure, can this be balanced by restoring an equivalent area of developed land to open space for other plant and animal species (for instance, derelict farmland)? (e) Will the decision affect the life quality of future generations adversely, or, is there inter-generational equity? (f) What is the 'opportunity cost' of closed options itself for future public choice? (g) How is the life quality of children, our greatest 'resource', affected? and so forth.

The above decision-making techniques derive from a rights-based ethic based on an androcentric model of Man. Further, it is a view of decision making made possible by the liberal model of Impersonal Man: the decision maker as a rational goal optimizer or 'satisficer'.<sup>2</sup> If we accept that the Masculine model of Man is not universal, is there any reason why we cannot develop in our children an Ethic of caring and responsibility, as opposed to one based on rights? Are the norms of risk-taking, interest balancing, and trading off rights (preferences) any more 'real' than the norm of preparing for a safe, secure future? Let us consider the idea of preferences in relation to environmental decision making.

### Preference based

The inability of the economist's models to comprehend environmental issues is becoming well understood.<sup>3</sup> But even if properly applied so as to take into account the long-term and indirect costs of development, the underlying concepts of economics are still incongruous when applied to environmental issues. This is because they are based on 'preferences' which are needs created by the market. For example, suburban sprawl has been attributed to people's preferences. Sprawl has in fact provided a greater market for appliances and cars. It has also isolated people and mandated the inefficient use of resources and energy. The market may lead to efficiencies in price but is highly wasteful of resources, and it has, of course,

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<sup>1</sup> Sara Ebenreck, 1983, "A Partnership Farmland Ethic", *Environmental Ethics* Vol 5 (1) pp. 43.

<sup>2</sup> 'Satisficing' was the term introduced by Herbert A. Simon, 1957, *Models of Man* (NY: Wiley). See also 1976, *Administrative Behaviour A Study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organization* 3rd ed. (NY: Free Press). See Amitai Etzioni, 1967, "Mixed Scanning: A 'Third' Approach to Decision-Making", *Public Administration Review* 27 (December) pp. 385-92.

<sup>3</sup> See Herman E. Daley and John B. Cobb, jr., 1989, *above*.

created other costs, such as social and psychological impacts which reverberate within the economy. People do not necessarily prefer these side effects of sprawl.

The mainstream environmental economists' approach purports to measure what people are willing to pay (or what payment they will forego) to preserve environmental amenity or wildlife. For example, there are several techniques to find 'surrogate markets' for those priceless public goods that have no market. This requires all kinds of assumptions that are value-laden and permits all kinds of manipulation in converting values to numbers. As a case in point, the 'hedonic' price approach looks at how property values vary with the environmental attributes of different neighbourhoods. By using multiple regressions, analysts can then assess what difference in property value is attributable to a unit increase in factors such as pollution, noise, or diminished view. But this excludes the opportunity cost of all the people who forego higher salaries, status and other benefits of city life to live closer to a relatively 'natural' environment (to which many urban refugees here in Tasmania can attest).

These Rationalist decision-making methods are ultimately based on the view of the self-interested, atomistic, non-sexed and non-gendered human of Pluralist theory who relates to others through exchange relationships. How is this so? Pluralism, as we have seen, raises individual rights above responsibilities because of its conception of the human as a freedom-seeking individual. The paradigm does not recognize Ethics, except in the narrow utilitarian sense of determining (contractual) rules by which to make decisions.<sup>1</sup> The choice of rules for decision making has been predetermined by the technocracy in the selection of positivist, economics-based techniques. Since equal rights fills the place of Ethics in this paradigm, 'ethical' decision making is taken as either synonymous with equity, or with maximizing aggregate individual welfare (as the utilitarian conception of the greatest good for the greatest number assumes the community is the sum of its individuals).

Pluralism thus supports and validates the economic concept of aggregating preferences in order to weigh alternative choices. But this conception is inherently biased against preservation because it ignores the realities of power relationships. Consumers and voters do not have meaningful choices because they do not have adequate information and, as we discussed above, they do not have a say in fundamental investment decisions. When members of the public object to development proposals which will result in resource exploitation and industrial pollution, the proponents of these projects claim they are just following the dictates of the 'market'. Problems which cannot be blamed on voters or consumers are attributed to the mythical 'invisible hand' (this con is air tight).

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<sup>1</sup> Again, ecofeminism would interpret Ethics to mean seeking fundamental, ecologically-based principles for guiding relationships, as opposed to formulas for making decisions.

## Wilderness and preferences

Wilderness preservation is an example of a problem that falls between the cracks of a resource allocation system that is based on the precepts of economics. Wilderness areas, as public land, can only be protected by Parliament or Congress. It is said that if people 'prefer' to preserve wilderness they can express this by their voting and purchasing behaviour. Thus, in a democracy, the citizen 'as voter' is ultimately held responsible, just as is the citizen 'as consumer' in the market. But to assume that wilderness is just a matter of 'preferences' is to assume it is either expendable or inexhaustible, which today should be considered tantamount to the view that the earth is flat.

The pricing system cannot protect wilderness (or non-human nature generally) in the long term. If market preferences are the source of value, wilderness will be valued highly enough to preserve only until economic cycles create a demand for more resources. While public protest may stop a particular development, the fate of wilderness will depend on the public perception of the economy in any given year. Even then, the fear of a scarcity of resources can be created (and often is). This perception is subject to manipulation by the media, which is controlled by powerful special interests.<sup>1</sup> As the scarcity of resources drives up the relative price, the public pressure to open wilderness up to development eventually becomes irresistible.

What environmental economists call 'existence values' - the measure of our 'preferences' for preserving the intrinsic value of nature - will also fluctuate with our perception of the economic situation.<sup>2</sup> (This is a peculiar concept, as the 'intrinsic value' of nature should not depend on its value to people.) When a scarcity of resources eventually drives up the use value of a remaining natural area relative to its existence value, it will again be divided with perhaps some more (smaller) areas set aside to meet the 'claims' of environmentalists. When wilderness is so scarce as to cease to be natural, or when segregated in islands, it will lose its value (and sustainability) as wilderness. This outcome is in no way 'balanced', as wilderness is gone forever.

Pluralism, which depicts the environmental problem as competing claims to environmental goodies, has militated against alternative (ecofeminist or deep ecologist) conceptions that value community and nature for their own sake. By legerdemain, Pluralism legitimizes a power-

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion on corporate influence over public opinion as a form of social control, see Elizabeth Noelle-Newmann, 1984, *The Spiral of Silence: Public Opinion and Our Social Skin* (University of Chicago Press). She argues that the media can shape public opinion by merely stating what public opinion is. Also, as minority views are deterred, the dominant viewpoint gains more force. See also H. McClosky and J. Zaller, 1985, *The American Ethos: Public Attitudes Toward Capitalism and Democracy* (MA: Harvard University Press).

<sup>2</sup> See for example, David Pearce, 1989, *Blueprint for a Green Economy* (London: Earthscan).

based social structure and yet makes it invisible by reifying individual rights and competition. This underwrites utilitarian, rationalist, decision-making techniques which favour the existing distribution of power. However, both Rationalism and Pluralism rely upon an androcentric model of Man for their legitimacy. Recognizing this, the intellectual structure is easy to dismantle.

## Regulatory design

Let us briefly review some criticisms that have been levelled at different types of environmental regulation. 'Ambient quality' pollution controls set standards for, say, air quality. One problem is that they assume a safe threshold level for toxic wastes although there are no safe thresholds for many toxic substances.<sup>1</sup> Also, there is not (as yet) adequate knowledge about the synergistic interrelations of chemicals, ecosystems, and human health in order to set thresholds of safety. 'Technology -based' pollution controls require the best available or practicable equipment (in terms of pollution minimization). They have also been criticized, as they effectively impose greater requirements on new industries and technologies by 'grandfathering' or giving dispensations to existing establishments. It seems inequitable to shut down old industries even if they are compensated. This again relates to the fact that ethical considerations - to the extent that they enter the picture - are taken for fairness, or 'equity' among producer interests. It is interesting how this norm contrasts with the well-established policy of paying farmers to *not* produce crops. By a similar logic, society could subsidize modernization rather than continuing to subsidize polluting industries by covering some of the resulting medical costs of its 'victims'.

The trend, however, is toward market-based regulations. These are based on the 'polluter pays' principle, whereby one can pollute if one, in effect, buys a ticket.<sup>2</sup> (Not only does this create a 'right' to pollute, it can make polluting fun: transferable development rights and emissions trading may soon appear as board games.) As a means of minimizing waste and resource consumption, of course, the 'user pays principle' makes sense as individuals become more ecologically aware if they have to pay for resource use directly. In the case of pollution, however, it is a different story. Emissions trading is where polluters are sold tradeable property rights in resources and can therefore buy and sell rights to pollute. It can be, in effect, a grant to continue the present rate of emissions by cleaning up pollution elsewhere.

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<sup>1</sup> Hilary Brown and John Valentine, 1981, *Power Corrupts: The Arguments against Nuclear Power* (London: Pluto Press).

<sup>2</sup> See generally G. Nagel, 1981, "Environmental Policy on the Hazards of Incentives and Merits of Regulations", in Frank Joyce, ed., *Local Government and Environmental Planning and Control* (Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company) pp. 138-151.

While it can reduce overall levels, it does not create much incentive to develop abatement technology. The method still requires the political will to force technological modernization through the reduction of the emissions value of permits. This requires some form of Planning system. Further, the method cannot take into account the relative value of the product produced, or the costs per job created. This means that market-based regulations can give a competitive advantage to a relatively anti-social product.

Part of the reason for these regulatory incongruities lies in the conceptual basis upon which the regulations are built. Although land, water and forests are often called public 'goods', our methods treat them as being raw materials of no intrinsic value. Thus their destruction can be compensated for or traded off by such devices as cash contributions, taxation, development impact fees or emissions trading schemes. Regulatory devices do not protect the public domain and public health, but merely exact a tax or royalties on their destruction, or provide for compensation in another area. Thus, a mine may be permitted which destroys an ecosystem, but half a million is required to be spent on developing a management plan for preserving one species of threatened parrot.

Planning regulations can also contribute *directly* to inefficiencies, conflict, and risk. For example, the process of monitoring and enforcing complex controls is expensive for both industry and taxpayers, and creates an incentive to oppose regulation in court - a highly non-productive activity. Further, the wrong activities are often regulated. For example, because Ethics is not recognized as a valid category of decision making, *risk taking* is not regulated. Instead, we regulate accidental or excessive pollution, usually by charging a fine after the fact. Those who profit from risk taking are penalized only if an accident occurs, based on a portion of the amount of damage. This is like stopping a reckless driver only after someone is killed and then only charging a fine. This form of subsidy gives corporations a fiscal incentive to take risks: because accidents are rare, one only has to pay a fine when one is caught, and the cost is invariably less than the damage.

There have, of course, been some alternative ideas mooted by planners and environmentalists with regard to both project assessment and development control. One approach is 'scenario planning', where the possible outcomes of alternative actions are predicted and compared. This is an improvement over methods geared toward merely deciding whether or not to approve a particular development. However, as scenario planning is geared to make the best use of investment capital, it is primarily useful for developers. For example, it is useful to governments in their capacity as developers in deciding, say, where to invest road building funds. As in the case of cost-benefit analysis, it is not practicable for determining social goals, but only for deciding which development to undertake. Like market and political decision-making processes, it cannot make more basic Ethical decisions. The system could, however, be expanded to acquire information on the broader ramifications of

these larger issues and improved means of assessing the impacts of human activities on different ecosystems precedent to determining the limits to growth.

Others have proposed Planning methods designed to correlate development with the carrying capacity of the environment. The assumption behind trying to establish a carrying capacity is that there is an amount of development that can occur without transgressing the limits of the ecosystem to sustain or repair itself. Along these lines, Jerzy Kozlowski has promoted what he calls the Ultimate Environmental Threshold or UET method.<sup>1</sup> The idea is that environmental boundaries are determined which then become the basis for constraining development and human activities; that is, development is framed by environmental 'dimensions'. These dimensions are spatial (the allowable area of an activity); quantitative (the allowable level or volume of the activity); qualitative (kind of output); temporal (allowable rate or time periods for development).<sup>2</sup>

In concept, the UET method is not unlike the conditions placed on development permits, only they could apply to all developments in a regional area. The result could be similar to 'pollution bubble' schemes, which allow a certain level of emissions for certain substances or set total air quality requirements for a region. Within the bubble, industries could distribute the allowable pollution rates among themselves by various emissions trading schemes. However, the UET process would attempt to consider the synergistic effects of chemicals and unite the different environmental media (air, water, soil).

While it is useful to determine the limits to regional development based on the carrying capacity of the environment, there are some problems here. For example, the concept is analogous to 'building envelopes' in urban development controls, which are defined by allowable yard areas, set-backs, height and bulk restrictions and floor area ratios. If one creates a 'solution space' in regional Planning, then, just as in the case of allowable building envelopes, projects will expand to fill the allowable space. Otherwise, developers feel they are not maximizing the development potential of the site.

Another problem is that it assumes there is a threshold beneath which the environmental impact is not significant. The same assumption was made in the case of radioactive and other toxic contaminants, until measurement techniques became so accurate that it could be determined that one part per trillion of, say, dioxin, was harmful. We may have already gone beyond the point of elasticity whereupon the capacity of GAIA to repair herself is transgressed. Even so, in the case of a highly overstressed planet, it is questionable if

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<sup>1</sup> Jerzy Kozlowski, 1986, *Threshold Approach in Urban, Regional and Environmental Planning* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press); Jerzy Kozlowski, no date, "Integrating Ecological Thinking into the Planning Process", Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (Reichpietschufer 50, 1000 Berlin (West) 30.

<sup>2</sup> Kozlowski, no date, *above* at p. 19.

development of any sort in the remaining (relatively) natural habitats can be considered safe. For example, the first use of this technique was a regional plan for the Tatry National Park in Poland. When seen as a self-contained park, development can easily be justified. But when a park in Poland is seen as a rare remnant island in a sea of environmental devastation, perhaps it is appropriate that no development occur. A region as big as a national park is still not self-contained.

## Prevention

Market-based techniques and regulations are an attractive alternative to calls for more fundamental institutional reform. The basic argument is that private interest in profit will lead to more 'efficiency' and that this will be adequate to reduce pollution. Yet individual polluters may prefer to continue polluting for a fee where, for example, the resource (eg. minerals, rare timbers) is running out, therefore making factory upgrading impractical. True economic efficiency would dictate that *no* pollution leave the site. When externalities and the replacement value of resources are considered, it necessarily costs the public more to clean up pollution and accidents than to pay for cleaner technologies outright. Thus, greens propose a 'preventative' approach where pollution is internalized *physically* by having a closed-loop system. This means, for example, that the intake of water for a timber mill would be piped back from downstream of the mill.

Prevention is the only cure. Once ecosystems are shattered for their resources or infiltrated with toxics, they will never be the same again. Environmental controls only filter or disperse pollution - it all gets into the environment eventually. And, as explained above, prevention means changing not only consumption patterns but the industrial processes and products. This our present regulations cannot do, especially where these processes and products give a competitive advantage. We have the capacity to enforce new technologies and systems, but because we impose the costs of regulations on individual firms, the conversion to sustainable production is politically infeasible. In the long run, it would be cheaper to forget the sunk cost and re-engineer industries or convert highly polluting activities to ecologically-sound ones at *public expense*. If society can afford to pension-off thousands of redundant workers, surely it can pension off a few industrialists. It may be cheaper in the long run for society as a whole to bear the cost of converting to sustainable industrial/commercial interests than to continue to subsidize the destruction of the environment. Again, this positive form of subsidy could only be achieved through some form of Planning system.

This form of subsidy suggests that greens and industrial interests share a common interest. Yet powerful interests do not lobby for this 'obvious' approach. Let us consider some possible reasons for this. First, because they are in a competitive mode, they perhaps cannot collectively demand compensation for industry-wide change. This is unlikely to be the case, because they presently operate on a collective basis to demand protection and subsidies from

governments. Second, they may be locked into a mode of grabbing what they can get from the public trough and are too busy felling trees to see the forest. Third, they may be 'irrational' in not pursuing their individual and collective self-interest. This latter possibility could be because powerful interests do not want to appear to be holding society to ransom, or accept accountability for their part in the problem - or even recognize that there is a problem. It could also be that the competitive mode is underwritten by a mindless power drive. Power for power's sake is (an inappropriate but) prevalent means of getting one's personal needs met.

This leads us to another problem. Let us assume that new, improved concepts and methods for determining the ultimate limits of development, evaluating proposed projects, and/or regulating development were designed. We would still be left with the problem of decision makers who still embody pre-ecological ways of thinking which would bias the implementation of general policies and site-specific decisions. This reality is faced by green politicians and activists daily.

### **The Impersonal decision maker**

The above concepts and methods might work fairly well if the assumptions of Pluralist society and Rational Man were true (Chapter 2). However, in a Patriarchal society at least, decision making is affected by both hierarchical power relations and personal emotional insecurities. Pressures of both kinds can lead to corruption. This has been reinforced by the traditional approach to analyses of government decision making which ignore individual emotional factors. The individual is treated as if she or he were a 'firm' or a black box on a management chart. Since Man is 'rational', he optimizes, by definition. And since Man is an optimizer (satisficer or maximizer), the decision maker in government becomes an objective public goal maximizer. It seems somewhat paradoxical that the competitive, self-interested, rational Man of the political/economic sphere becomes a selfless decision-making node when employed in the public sector. In both cases, however, He is a goal-oriented information processor rather than an emotionally complex (and sexed) individual.<sup>1</sup> It follows from the mechanistic view of the human that poor decisions or outcomes must simply be the result of the decision maker's inability to cope with information and complexity.

The traditional portrayal of planners and officials as Rational goal maximizers was considered problematic in that it did not explain poor Planning decisions, and the widely

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<sup>1</sup> The traditional view of organizational behaviour conceived of humans as "mechanisms for computation and choice", limited by environmental and intellectual constraints. See Herbert A. Simon, 1957, *Models of Man: Social and Rational* (NY: John Wiley & Sons), especially Part IV, from p. 196.



recognized failure of policy implementation in Planning. The decision maker came to be described as a goal 'sufficer' who would only scan a limited range of options, bounded by an aspiration level that fluctuated with the available time, resources, energy and information.<sup>1</sup> Later the 'garbage can' model was introduced, a metaphor which conveyed the idea that decision makers took mixed scraps of information from anywhere. Problems were explained in terms of the human's inability to process information, while the model of Impersonal Man remained essentially the same.

This narrow, positivist, and gender-blind view of decision making meant that the psychological, political, and cultural influences on the decision maker were not adequately factored into analyses. Actual resource allocation processes that did not fit the Impersonal decision maker model were left unanalyzed. Therefore, deals, bargains, custom, Corruption, and personal influence from within and without government decision making were largely ignored. Because the political activity did not fit the Rationalist paradigm that has dominated studies of decision making, these factors were not considered relevant to Planning and administrative theory.<sup>2</sup>

More recent theories, such as process models,<sup>3</sup> consider the interaction of power and values, such as the effects of 'rules of the game' and 'non decision-making' structures. However, they largely ignore the irrational by-products of Patriarchal programming on (particularly) the male psyche. They cannot explain the political behaviour of bureaucrats intent on building a dam regardless of the public opposition or economic/social arguments against it (apparently just to prove their masculinity: Appendix 1).

Further, the Rational model does not comprehend the idea of Corruption. To repeat, systemic Corruption occurs where a government agency betrays the public trust by transferring resources to special interests at net public cost and without significantly violating organizational and/or institutional norms. This form of Corruption - the misappropriation of public resources and trust - is not necessarily deliberate, but is a function of the perceptual 'filter' formed by the organizational Infrastructure itself. In the Rational decision-making model, Corrupt behaviour is not stigmatized, at least to the extent that it is consistent with Rational or self-interest maximizing behaviour.<sup>4</sup> For example, it has been argued that,

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<sup>1</sup> Herbert A. Simon, 1976, *Administrative behaviour A Study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organization* 3rd ed. (NY: Free Press).

<sup>2</sup> Janis Birkeland-Corro, 1988, "Land Use Planning and Conflict Resolution", *Australian Planner* (March) pp. 8-11.

<sup>3</sup> See R.H. Simmons, B.W. Davis, R.J.K. Chapman, and D.D. Sager, 1974, "Policy Flow Analysis: A Conceptual Model for Comparative Public Research", *Western Political Quarterly* 27 (3) pp. 457-468.

<sup>4</sup> See Steven Kelman, 1981, *What Price Incentives? Economists and the Environment* (Boston: Auburn House).

according to the logic of micro-economic analysis, resources should not be invested in eliminating Corruption unless it is cost effective to do so.<sup>1</sup> This approach ignores the moral dimension of Corruption altogether and it also assumes that the given system, which fosters Corruption, is adequate to prevent Corruption.

## Efficiency

Due to this mechanistic model, efficiency has been taken as an ultimate goal, rather than a means, and efficiency has been measured in terms of cost. This narrow view of what constitutes efficiency is in part because the administrative sciences have built upon ideas taken from private sector micro-economic theory. This theory is useful to explain the behaviour of the individual firm - if that firm's goal is to maximize profits. Generally, therefore, micro-economic theory is applicable for developing means for firms to arrive at optimal business decisions in terms of profit alone.

As a consequence, decision-making models in the administrative sciences were based on a one-dimensional and vertical goal structure, parallel to that of profit maximization by the individual firm. Following the administrative sciences, planners studied the government process in terms parallel to that of the private firm. Their analyses were thus based on a linear and rational goal structure. As noted above, the model was incongruous as government organizations are concerned with multiple and often conflicting goals.<sup>2</sup>

In a one-dimensional goal structure, the Rational decision maker theoretically has one motive - to optimize - whether profit, efficiency or social welfare. To optimize means to increase the efficiency of the means-ends relationship. In government, the superordinate goal has increasingly been considered to be efficiency *per se*, rather than the profits that, in the private sector, are to be achieved through efficiency. Efficiency is taken to be the highest goal despite the fact that sub-optimization at the agency level often means waste of resources and inefficiency at broader levels. For example, maximizing the efficiency of a hydro-electric agency may result in an oversupply of energy or a misallocation of resources to capital intensive energy facilities, as opposed to more cost-effective conservation measures.

For purposes of accounting, efficiency has also come to be synonymous with social welfare, though it also refers to the relationship of input to output. This has been confused, in practice, with *cost minimization*. Other goals or other types of efficiency could just as well have been selected. We could, for example, seek efficiency in 'life saving', energy or material (input/output) efficiency, or 'ecological effectiveness'. Health indices could also be used to

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<sup>1</sup> For example, see Edward C. Banfield, 1975, "Corruption as a Feature of Governmental Organization", *Journal of Law and Economics* 18 pp. 587-605.

<sup>2</sup> See generally P.M. Jackson, 1982, *The Political Economy of Bureaucracy* (Oxford: Philip Allan Publishers).

measure efficiency. It must be remembered also that efficiency was not selected through a democratic process. Rather, it developed through the shared consensus of a technocratic elite. Moreover, the goal of efficiency was never really questioned by the technocracy. It has been the dominant value of academic and professional models since the turn of the century. Efficiency has also been the dominant goal in the eastern bloc or socialist countries, despite the cold war - supporting mythology that the two camps had diametrically opposed values and ideologies. The technocracy in both political blocs, socialist and capitalist, marched to the beat of the same drum - cost efficiency to be achieved through the control of all factors of production.

It is hard to oppose fatherhood terms like efficiency. After all, it appears to be a value-free concept for measuring input and output, and implies conservation of resources. However, efficiency is not value free when placed in context. When, in the name of cost efficiency, government agencies or elected representatives assume cost minimization and economic growth as the goal, they place the welfare of large corporate interests above public health and environmental quality - both of which are also vital 'resources'. This transfer of resources and costs is possible because people are denied a meaningful *choice* through the operation of the Planning system itself. As we have seen, the public has not selected cost efficiency as the goal upon which the decision-making models are built (they have never been voted upon and are not in the Constitution). Nor has the public been given a real choice of whether to achieve efficiency through a growth or a conservation policy.

Cost efficiency has been a goal, yet in a 'rational' decision-making system, it would be a secondary criterion for selecting among development options, below more fundamental goals such as planetary and human survival. Given the androcentric Enlightenment view of Man, however, the quest for self-realization has been more fundamental, so basic and natural in fact, that it need not be named. And, as progress is the manifestation of androcentric Man's quest for self-realization, progress has been associated with welfare. Where does this leave us? When we put the above assumptions together, we have the following circuitous logic: (a) progress = welfare; (b) welfare is measured by efficiency; (c) efficiency requires control over all means of production; (d) control is achieved through economic growth. And (if  $a = b$ , and  $b = c$ , and  $c = d$ , then  $a = d$ ), therefore, growth = progress. In sum, welfare, efficiency, control, growth, and progress have been invisibly, yet inextricably linked.

This chain of values holds together only because 'the personal' element has been dropped from the equation. Man has become a rational goal optimizer who seeks policy change to make the political context more amenable to the furtherance of His goals through pluralist struggle. We are trapped in a closed system of Masculine values. The Planning system has evolved around concepts that have been unselfconsciously selected 'of, for and by' those who are inculcated to associate progress with their sense of self. But where is the Feminine

principle in this equation? What about personal and emotional dimensions of life? (Appendix 2 gives an account of how this value system affects the ability of citizens to undertake community improvements.)

In this chapter, I have suggested that the public and private sectors increasingly use the same one-dimensional processes and methods for reaching decisions. Planning methodology shapes goals and criteria that create an inherent bias against environmental protection by, among other things, framing Ethical issues as technical choices and ignoring the realities of power and gender influences in decision making behaviour. Planners are becoming merely economic auditors. As more people come to perceive Planning as an extension service of the development industry, it will lose any remaining legitimacy as a forum for resolving environmental conflict.

## CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION OF PART II

### Recap

It has been said that the reform of our decision-making system is 'no substitute for making the right decisions about resource allocation'. I have argued, however, that over the long term, at least, we cannot make the right decisions within the present system, regardless of what policies we may officially adopt. Contrary to the prevailing ideology of economic determinism, some form of Planning is essential for a sustainable society, as it enables a society to provide for basic needs and 'freedoms' within a long-term framework. However, given its present design, Planning contributes to the economic and ethical deficiencies of the Allocation system, and exacerbates the environmental problems and social conflict which justify its existence in the first place.

Of course, many examples of sound, substantively rational Planning can be cited. But in the context of the accelerating destruction of the environment, those decisions which are not ecologically sound will eventually cancel out any that are. As unalienated land, resources, and amenity continue to diminish, social conflict must inevitably increase, particularly in the absence of an environmental conflict prevention system. Therefore, Planning cannot achieve basic needs, the most basic of which is sustainability. If we are to begin to heal the earth and human spirit, an entirely new public choice system is needed that will enable society to debate and decide the fundamental Ethical questions that underlie environmental problems, and to engage in preventative planning. A Planning sphere that can assist us in making the necessary transition to a society that exists in harmony with itself and the rest of nature must be, not only separate, but of an entirely new order. It must be Ethics-based as opposed to market or power-based (again, I refer to an Ethic of care and responsibility rather than a rights-based or egalitarian conception of ethics).

The previous chapters have been an attempt to contribute to this rethink. This has involved (a) a redefinition of the environmental problem; (b) a realignment of the major public decision-making institutions for resource allocation - the political, legal, market and Planning areas ('superstructure'); (c) a reconstruction of the Planning system itself ('structure'); and, (d) a redesign of the methods and processes of Planning practice ('infrastructure'). Let us briefly review the ground we have covered in reaching this conclusion.

We saw that Planning thought is premised on the androcentric assumptions of Pluralist ideology, a prism designed around (atomistic) individuals and rights-based social relations. It therefore cannot envelop the environment, or 'third dimension'. Thus, the solution sought is

more equity and efficiency, rather than prevention and preservation. In a Pluralist framework, the concept of 'ethics' itself has been narrowly construed to mean distributional justice - who should obtain the benefits of environmental exploitation and how quickly. The decision-making framework itself causes us to construe environmental problems as matters of distribution. Environmental issues cannot be resolved by rights-based forms of disputation. This is not a sufficient Ethic upon which to build a system that can prevent environmental conflict.

For practical purposes, the 'crux' of the environmental problem can more usefully be understood as the *abuse of power* and the resulting transfer of resources from public to corporate interests (often at below real cost), which leads to a spiral of environmental destruction, social injustice, and conflict. Such a problem definition suggests very different solutions than the conventional treatment of environmental problems as 'the need to balance competing interests' in resources, or its more radical version, 'the need to extend the ethics of egalitarianism to include nature'. The redesign is based on preventing the abuse of power, and on fairness of outcomes, rather than fairness of process alone.

We saw that powerful development interests reinforced by a blind faith in market determinism dictate government policy. Rather than providing checks on market and political decision making, Planning replicates these systems in making trade-offs of environmental protection for short-term private 'wants'. Hence, ultimately, Planning favours the powerful and facilitates the transfer of resources to special interests. One reason for this is that (with regard to significant development projects) public sector Planning is merging with that of the business sector through corporatist decision-making processes.

The conventional description of this resource allocation system, in contrast, presents the public and private sectors in a dichotomous relationship. It portrays the resource allocation system as dualistic when it is, in fact, hierarchical. This creates a series of false choices in the public imagination which advantages powerful development interests. A new descriptive model was proposed to accentuate the problems with the actual resource allocation system.

An alternative to the hierarchical system and its dualistic ideology is proposed. Because Planning is permeated with power-based ideologies and practices that promote self-interest and competition, it cannot be reformed. Giving more importance to Planning would therefore not be sufficient. A new, relatively autonomous social decision-making arena is therefore necessary to deal with Ethical (environmental) issues. While the design and implementation of Ethics-based decision-making processes and methods is essential, institutional reform is not a solution in itself. It cannot overturn the realities of structural power and decades of collective value formation. One advantage of a new institution, however, is that vestiges of old ways of thinking are more easily prevented than weeded out. Also, as institutional change is necessary and reciprocal to social transformation, new institutions can help stimulate social change.

The Planning sphere would be on a more equal footing with the market and political sphere to form a (tri-partite) model of governance, with a fourth legal arena mediating these spheres. The function of the new governmental structure would be to constrain the abuse of power and enable society as a whole us to address environmental, as well as social and economic issues. A tri-partite model would help to create such safeguards as 'checks and balances' and 'separation of powers' - principles which, though enshrined by liberal thought, have been lost through the corruption of our rights-based decision-making institutions.

The Planning system itself would need more appropriate structure and function. I have suggested that the Planning system does not, at present, encourage a 'preventative' problem solving approach that is necessary for sustainability. Planning has been concerned with the physical side effects of wealth transfers, rather than with the ethical, ecological, and economic implications of the wealth transfers themselves. It only mitigates the environmental and social impacts of decisions in the political and market arenas. It does so by remedial measures, modifying the rate of environmental destruction, or settling disputes over the impacts of development - after the fundamental direction or course of action has been set by developers.

Planning is often attacked as constraining development, yet (by the fact of its existence) it subsidizes development and promotes growth in many ways. This apparent anomaly is resolved when we recognize that economic planners who are involved in facilitating growth or *production* are confused with physical planners who are involved in regulating *consumption*. In the new Planning sphere these two systems would be combined so that production could be linked directly to conservation in a rational manner. In this way, the costs of subsidies and the distribution of externalities could be made visible and linked to benefits.

Planning methods address the third dimension (the environment) with concepts appropriate for two dimensions: Man and His society. Decision-making tools (such as cost-benefit analyses) are primarily useful for determining distributional questions (such as where, how much). They tend to 'balance the good and the bad' - or trade off the needs of future generations, the poor, and other species with the narrow, immediate wants of consumers and producers. This is because (even progressive) planners employ concepts derived from the field of business management and economics. The result is a kind of cost-benefit analysis system writ large, designed for 'balancing and choosing' among development proposals - a process biased against keeping social options open. Redefining the purpose of Planning as 'designing a sustainable society' would result in different Planning methods. The case for an Ethics-based system is essentially as follows:

### **The need for an Ethics-based system**

(a) *Planning, as an institution, is legitimate (in the traditional sense) only if it can improve the condition of society and protect the planet.* According to traditional contract theory of

government, human survival and fulfilment (or health and sustainability) would be among the basic objectives of any conventional Planning system. The most basic physical and emotional needs cannot be met in the absence of environmental quality and peace. Human 'needs', of course, logically include the well-being of all natural life forms and ecosystems upon which humans depend.

Some have argued that anthropocentric arguments should not be used because they reinforce the human-centred perspective that some creatures have no survival value to the ecosystems upon which humans depend and might therefore be eliminated. However, while I agree, an anthropocentric person should nonetheless appreciate that an ecosystem depends upon all its components. In any case, as communication is a two-way street, it is necessary to begin the search for common ground with the anthropocentric mainstream. Therefore, the case for an Ethics-based system should begin with a premise acceptable to traditionalists as well.

(b) *Environmental quality and peace require social justice.* Although moral relativists could argue that there are no ultimate principles for structuring human relationships, those that result in the destruction of the life support system are folly by any standard. Social structures based on dominance relations eventually lead to systems that abuse both human and non-human nature (see Part III). For example, an unjust social system tends to become more unjust as those on top exploit their advantage. Such a society eventually leads to militarism, at home and/or abroad, in order to maintain social control. Militarism destroys the environment even in the absence of actual war, through wasteful production and the creation of vast amounts of toxic waste. Also, it can be argued that dominance relationships or various forms of enslavement destroy the human spirit as well ('a life lived in fear is a life half lived').

(c) *Social justice requires a sustainable level of consumption (as distinguished, of course, from 'sustainable development', an oxymoron).* Land, water, air, life forms, ecosystems and so on are finite. World poverty has been the result - not of limited resources - but of dominance relationships reflected in, for example, the conversion of Third World resources to First World commodities, the destruction of local economies and disenfranchisement of small landowners through colonization, 'created dependency' on herbicides and fertilizers and, of course, inequitable distribution. Nonetheless, the demands for equality for the vast majority of the world's population who have been deprived of safe drinking water, basic health care, and self-reliance cannot be met with diminishing and degraded resources. Thus, more equitable distribution is no substitute for sustainable consumption. Each condition is dependent on the other.

(d) *Sustainable resource allocation requires a preventative Planning system.* Decision-making systems biased toward meeting the preferences (as opposed to needs) of individuals cannot preserve natural ecosystems, which is the prerequisite to sustainable consumption. Efficient consumption cannot preserve ecosystems. Prevention is necessary. Given the above,



a preventative Planning system that would provide for human survival is one that can, at a minimum: protect or restore our life support systems, preserve cultural and biological diversity, and prevent conflict over natural resources and amenities. (I use the terms prevent, protect and *restore* purposefully, because 'sustaining' what we now have is not good enough. For instance, woodchippers have argued they can increase the 'sustainable yield' of an ancient forest by harvesting it. However, the forest then loses a native forest values, such as a habitat for wildlife and as a watershed. 'Sustainable logging' of rainforests is a contradiction in terms.

(e) *Finally, these imperatives require an Ethics-based, as opposed to a power-based, decision-making Infrastructure, for their realization* : Our existing decision-making institutions are not designed to address, let alone resolve, Ethical issues. Environmental problems are treated as consumption issues, or who gets how much, how fast and when. Thus, while our power-based market, political, Planning and legal systems may settle immediate disputes regarding resource distribution, they are at best postponing conflict and hence increasing instability in the long term. Conflict over environmental goods and amenities around the world can only increase as the public domain diminishes.

## A Constitutional approach

It is surely time for self-governance; but where do we begin? If the abuse of power is the problem, the solution must find means to expose and prevent the abuse of power on psychological and institutional levels. I have argued that, in a social structure built upon hierarchical systems and power-based personal relationships, institutions and methods are eventually corrupted to serve the interests of the powerful, who select and propagate (dualistic) ideologies that suit their interests.

Of course, any social decision-making system is subject to the same degenerative forces if individuals in it seek power. Also informal relationships will always exist, and can be obscured behind formal statements of principle. But while any system can become distorted and imbalanced over time, a Constitutional system is harder to corrupt (all other things being equal), because it makes the ethical basis for structures, actions, and decisions explicit. This means that departures from the underlying Ethical principles (as opposed to goals) can be recognized and acted upon before powerful interests become entrenched and unaccountable.

The collective development of an Ethics-based environmental decision-making system through a constitutional process would therefore be a reasonable place to start the process of institutional reform. The constitutional approach that I have in mind for the design of a new Planning arena must be *substantively* different from past constitutional experiments, however. For example, while the United States Constitution and its Bill of Rights provides a model, its values are inadequate for Planning issues. The liberal model, being two-dimensional, is only

capable of encapsulating issues of interpersonal rights as opposed to responsibilities or an ethic of care. A beacon in its time, the U.S. Constitution is now out of date, as it was concerned only with protecting the 'rights' of Man (literally). It therefore reinforces an individualistic, competitive, Patriarchal social structure that conflicts with the caring, relational, and responsible attitude toward the world and one another that is called for.

The proposal here, differs from the United States, Canadian, and Australian Constitutions in that ecologically-based principles would form the Constitution upon which the Planning system *itself* would be designed. The decision-making methods, processes, and structures themselves would derive from and adhere to these fundamental ecological/Ethical precepts. It must be emphasized that this is a very different thing from the present practice of developing objectives and policies for implementation within the existing (biased) theoretical and institutional framework. For example, several significant environmental laws in the United States, such as the federal Endangered Species Act and Wilderness Acts, were supported by preambles which stated Ethical principles. However, the methods employed pursuant to the legislation were not consistent with these principles, based as they were upon concepts from economic liberalism.

A basic problem with any institutional reform is that before this design process can occur, some devolution of power through the existing political system is required. The paradox is, of course, that this new framework for social decision-making - even if necessary for human survival - has little prospect of implementation within the present decision-making structure. It is unlikely to be achieved through representative democracy, where decision making is controlled by powerful extra-mural interests. It is also unlikely to be achieved through voting processes where preferences are manipulated by big business, and Ethical considerations scarcely enter the public debate. Any solution to the social/environmental crisis requires that powerful interests give up power, and this, in a Patriarchal society, is a form of crucifixion for which there is presently no reward. As taken up in Part III, the powerful will only relinquish power if their personal and emotional needs are met in some way other than *indirectly* through dominance and status seeking.

The response to these counter-arguments (apart from psychological approaches just referred to) is that such major restructurings have occurred before. After wars and revolutions of independence, several countries have been able to start from the ground up, inspired by a new vision of humanity. The Bill of Rights, for example, gave legislative form to a new model of Man-in-relation-to-Man. (More cynical interpretations of history are, of course, possible as well.) At one time, it was a major step forward to recognize that despotic royalities did not have the divine right to rule. Around the world today, there is less acquiescence to corrupt, despotic, governments, whether 'elected' or not. The next great leap, logically, is to give legislative form to a new understanding of the intrinsic value of the ecological community. In

this context, the tri-partite Ethics-based Constitution could be seen as less radical and threatening than revolution - perhaps even a welcome bridge to a sustainable society.

A second dilemma is this. The sort of precepts upon which the new Planning system would be built cannot be ascertained or weighed scientifically. Therefore, they should be adopted by the general public through an open, educative, and participatory process, following reasoned public debate. But the population is presently steeped in anthropocentric/Patriarchal values. There are two responses to this problem. First, people are much more ethically-minded in subscribing to general principles before specific issues affecting themselves arise (thereby avoiding situational ethics). Second, community-based and person-to-person processes are the only context within which the necessary educative processes can occur. Citizens will not take responsibility for public decisions until they are in a position to have some say in public matters, something the electoral system now discourages.

### **Constitutive goals**

Assuming for the moment a new Planning sphere were created, what would its Constitution look like? As the Constitution would necessarily be developed democratically, I can only offer suggestions. The constitutional process would, of course, be conducted on principles of participatory democracy. In a genuine democracy, the broader public needs to be involved at the stage of determining what goals we are to invest in and what means will be used to achieve them. However, green planners and academics could contribute to the realization of a new Planning system by developing proto-type Planning Constitutions for public consideration and debate. The generation of proposals could help governments, their staff, and advisers to see the feasibility of substantively rational public decision-making and planning to occur.

If the fundamental *purpose* of Planning is to design a sustainable society, the basic *function* of Planning would therefore be to ensure the prerequisites of sustainability and prepare for basic needs. It would function as a preventative planning system, aimed at resolving environmental conflict, rather than settling disputes. Planning as an activity, then, would be a community-based process for determining collective social, economic, and environmental goals in the long term public interest. This is markedly different from current definitions that emphasize guiding land use efficiently and/or distributing resources equitably.

To determine the *foundational goals* of the new decision-making system, then, we would begin at the bottom line, or basic needs. It has been estimated by many scientific organizations that the earth may have only decades left before it breaches the ecological 'point of elasticity', or point of total irreversible ecosystem break down - assuming the environmental crisis is reversible. Perhaps the most basic need is sustainability (which is constituted by the preservation of our cultural and natural heritage, peace, health, and social justice and a safe, secure future). Therefore (a) ensuring sustainability, or biospheric health and (b) promoting

human fulfilment would be reasonable foundational goals for most people, regardless of their social/political orientation (anthropocentric goals are used for wider acceptance).

If Planning is to foster these goals, it would have to be designed to meet at least the following basic *imperatives* (mentioned above): (a) to protect and restore our life support system, (b) to preserve cultural and biological diversity, (c) to provide for the basic needs and health of living beings, and (d) to prevent conflict over resources and environmental amenity.

Among the formative *criteria* for a decision-making system that could, if adopted, meet these basic imperatives (above) would be, for example: (a) to avoid unnecessary risk (eg. by not poisoning the environment), (b) to prevent unconstructive conflict, by facilitating substantive public debate, (c) to keep future options open by avoiding irreversible decisions (eg. via biological diversity, non-nuclear defence and energy options, and wilderness preservation), and (d) inhibit the potential for the abuse of power.

**Figure 11: Draft guidelines for a Planning system**

<b>Purpose</b>	Designing a sustainable society.
<b>Function</b>	Prepare for basic needs (preservation of our cultural and natural heritage, peace, health, social justice and a safe, secure future.
<b>Goals</b>	Ensure ecological sustainability (biospheric health) Promote human fulfilment.
<b>Imperatives</b>	Protect and restore the life support system. Preserve cultural and biological diversity. Provide for basic needs and health of living beings. Prevent conflict over resources and environmental quality.
<b>Criteria</b>	Avoid unnecessary risk. Prevent unconstructive conflict (by facilitating substantive public debate and conflict resolution. Keep future options open (by avoiding irreversible decisions). Inhibit the abuse of power.

### Operation of the system

Once the system is established, how would specific issues be dealt with? The process could involve lay citizens from a diverse background serving as jurors to assess Ethical criteria and concepts for policy development and implementation. These policy issues centre on basic controversies that cannot be contained within a 'me first' or 'pocket book' perspective' such as genetic engineering, population growth, and appropriate technology. The purpose would be to encourage citizens to think about issues that are never included in the ballot box or supermarket approach to voting, and to enlighten elected personalities who seem to seldom consider the deeper aspects of political issues. Once the basic decision-making policies are adopted, citizens could workshop and adjudicate Planning decisions.

In a complementary proposal, some activists in Tasmania are developing a new polling system, called Odpoll (opinion development poll) to elicit public views on substantive issues.<sup>1</sup> Unlike other polls, which try to ascertain people's current preferences, the primary aim of the

<sup>1</sup> Proposed by former Tasmanian forester, Paul Smith.

Odpoll is to foster the development of public debate. Questions of fundamental importance, permanently available in the form of a booklet, would be solicited at regular (say, yearly) intervals. Voting would be voluntary and be accessible by phone. The desired result would be the discussion of these weightier issues in the community at large. Trends in public opinion over time would then be more apparent to voters, politicians and corporate managers. Of course, this scheme is premised on the naive assumption that politicians listen to voters rather than business and industry. It also ignores the idea that basic tension between democracy and sustainability; however, such a process would nonetheless empower people and encourage the taking of responsibility.

Only *face-to-face* democracy can counteract both the problems of internalized Patriarchal structures and values, and of electoral and representative democracy (such as media manipulation, biased voting procedures and the ability to 'purchase' decisions). The process itself would be educative, community building, and encourage people to question underlying assumptions and to think in terms of basic social goals. This community-building process would not, by itself, achieve the social transformation required, but it would at least contribute to the self-critical, empowering processes we must work to develop. It would still serve as a community-building and educative process, and improve the communicative and thinking skills of those involved. Such an undertaking could also serve as an experiment for the broader social reconstruction process that is required. While slow, the means are as important as the ends, because otherwise we inevitably end up back where we began, at Patriarchy.

I have presented a reform proposal and the (ecofeminist) analysis on which it is based, if only to improve the level of debate. The reader will undoubtedly be sceptical: how could a comprehensive and radical reform proposal ever be implemented, when previous attempts have failed? This is the question addressed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 8: IMPEDIMENTS TO REFORM

### Introduction

In order to reform the Planning system, it is necessary to examine the reasons why the system has not been reformed to this point. This discussion (and Appendix 1) retraces, in a manner of speaking, my own personal Odyssey through efforts at Planning reform, and explains why I began to search for a new paradigm for social change that relates the personal to the political, and centres on causes and cures for the abuse of power.

Generally speaking, greens and progressive planners understand that representative politics and the market, as decision-making systems, are biased toward short-term interests and against sustainable resource allocation. Yet, in their concern over the social and environmental costs of inappropriate or unsustainable development, they have tended to assume 'more and better' environmental planning is the answer. On the other hand, traditional planners (while relatively unconcerned about environmental issues) have at least recognized that there is a serious problem within the existing Planning system itself. Their concern, however, has been primarily focused on the economic costs associated with both poorly conceived forms of regulation. Thus for decades it was commonplace at mainstream Planning seminars and workshops to hear the Planning system characterized as an accumulation of piecemeal changes resulting in an inefficient and anachronistic system.<sup>1</sup> (Tasmania epitomizes this problem, as the Planning system has remained virtually unchanged *in substance* since the 1940s.)

If planners on the right side of the traditional political spectrum are correct about the inefficiencies and conflict entailed by current practices and those on the left are correct about the long-term costs of poor environmental decision making, then retooling the management and regulatory system would make both economic and ecological sense. After all, restoring environmental quality necessarily costs far more in the long run than do prevention measures. However, despite vast amounts of time and energy invested in talking about Planning reform, there have been (to my knowledge) no proposals for *ecologically-sound* institutional reform of a fundamental nature anywhere in the liberal democratic world. Bioregional Planning, of course, represents a new form of 'plan' which seeks to reflect natural boundaries and processes, but it does not represent a new form of 'planning'. Such major Planning reforms as

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<sup>1</sup> There may now be a disturbing trend in the opposite direction however. For example, in an Australian planning conference on sustainable development in 1991, the organizers indicated that they wanted only case studies or nuts and bolts papers, and the flyer which advertized the conference stated that planning practice was 'on track'.

have occurred have not addressed what I have contended are the anachronistic concepts, methodological bias, and conflict-generating practices of the decision-making system itself.

As this inertia suggests, the barriers to ecologically-friendly institutional reform are daunting. In fact, as I suggest below, the impediments are such that perhaps only radical change can be effective and lasting. Herbert Kaufman, although proceeding from an a-political account of the difficulties of organizational change, also concludes that:

It may be more economical to introduce some innovations by replacing organizations than by reforming them. In fact, the death of intransigent or rigid but influential organizations may facilitate social change more readily than marginal adjustments that keep the old organizations alive but resistant to innovation.<sup>1</sup>

To continue with incremental reform has no more prospect of success than continually pruning a tree with root fungus. Institutions, by and large, are inseparable from the broader social context. Thus problems of institutional reform entail problems of social change generally.

To comprehend the pervasiveness and depth of the problem underlying planning reform, we now survey some structural, communicative, conceptual, and ideological barriers to reform. I hope to demonstrate that the difficulties of reforming the Planning system all relate back to (a) dominance relationships (b) dualistic thinking and (c) the fallacy of Rational Man, all of which (as discussed in Part III) are part and parcel of Patriarchal consciousness. These kinds of (personal) issues are avoided by reformists as well as conformists, I suggest, largely because of the cultural taboos of Patriarchy.

For example, among the right, it is generally felt to be 'unprofessional' to analyze non-rational motivations in organizational behaviour. The exercise of self-interest is a matter of optimizing measurable benefits, not the satisfaction of unconscious, emotional needs. Such motivations are of course attributed to consumers (the masses) by those in marketing, but they are not generally attributed to professionals (the elite) by academics and theorists. Among the left, personal motivations (jealousy, insecurity, resentment, power for power's sake) are viewed as products of the bureaucratic organization, rather than attempts by the actors to have their unacknowledged emotional needs met. The system is made responsible for behaviour Rational Man would prefer not to 'own'.

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<sup>1</sup> Herbert Kaufman, 1971, *The Limits of Organizational Change* (AL: University of Alabama Press) at p. 98.



## Dominance relationships

In understanding many of the impediments to reform, it is helpful to examine them in terms of hierarchical structures and dominance relationships. Perhaps the first impediment to Planning reform that springs to mind is the formal design of the political system itself. In Tasmania, for example, by virtue of the Constitution, the conservative Upper House, the Legislative Council, has remained unchanged for 140 years. Due to its design, it can block any reform: it can even block reform of itself by the Parliament as a whole. It can also take a government to an election without itself having to go to the polls (reputedly the only Upper House in the world with this power). Change is therefore dependent upon an 'old boy's club', the members of which gain personal benefit from the existing institutional and social structure.

To date, there have been some 30 legislative attempts to amend Tasmania's Constitution Act, and most of them have been to reform aspects of the Legislative Council's powers. All have failed. You don't have to search far to find the reason ... there's one in every Legislative Council electorate.<sup>1</sup>

Those with power have little inclination to even consider changing a structure which protects their monopoly on power. Change only comes when the powerful are made to want a change - apart from cases of violent revolutions, which seem to replace one problem with another. When organizational changes are made, these tend to be due to the energies of those motivated to increase their personal power.

Another structural barrier is the pyramidal complexity of bureaucratic organizations. Any change to one area of governance involves change in other aspects of the whole system. Bureaucratic reforms therefore tend to add a further layer of administration or to be cosmetic, perhaps involving no more than a change of names, but they seldom address the more fundamental problems. Such administrative changes, by creating the illusion of reform, can even impede genuine progress. But the problem of bureaucratic complexity is more than a matter of intellectual strain. Threats of reorganization upset the existing power relationships among individuals and agencies of government, leading to surreptitious and sometimes overt power struggles:

In fact, people sometimes seem to resist innovation even when they cannot identify any results harmful to them, simply because they grow anxious about consequences they cannot foresee that might injure their interests. Occasionally they resist even when they know they will suffer no injury in order to exact concessions or other advantages in return for their acquiescence.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Di Hollister, 1991, "Colonial Rule Totters On: Men Who Still Talk of Floggings ...", *The Daily Planet*: Newsletter of the Tasmanian Green Independents, 4 (September) at p. 6. Di Hollister is a Green Independent member of the Tasmanian House of Assembly.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Kaufman, 1971, *above* at p. 11.

Even in a relatively simple bureaucratic structure, such as in Tasmania, there are myriad points where reform proposals can be shunted onto side tracks. Bureaucratic complexity is one reason why privatization has been a popular way out of the proverbial morass: it simply eliminates what it defines as the problem, 'government bureaucracy' and thereby avoids feudal infighting. Unfortunately, privatization simply transfers wealth and power without addressing the problems underlying what is blamed upon bureaucratic failure. In short, in a power-based structure, any change will threaten positions within the hierarchy, but only changes that benefit the powerful - being at present the corporate sector - will prevail.

Political structures notwithstanding, there are also practical barriers to even developing comprehensive reform proposals in the first place. For example, issues concerning the allocation of land and resources cut across many professional boundaries, and these professions need to collaborate in developing a comprehensive reform proposal if it is to be successful. Yet there is a lack of consensus, let alone a common perception, even as to what the legitimate scope and function of a Planning system should be. Foresters, lawyers, and engineers bring different discipline-based values and attitudes toward the land, and there are differing paradigms and ideologies operating within these disciplines as well. Moreover, those in a professional discipline share an ideological prism and linguistic structure which filters out information that does not conform to the basic precepts of that thought system. For example, as we have seen, concepts like environmental ethics, to the extent that they cannot be squeezed into the normative concepts of equity or efficiency, are left out of the picture. Thus, in my experience, interdisciplinary working groups have resembled a Tower of Babel, with people talking past each other until mutual frustration builds up.

Perhaps more significantly, meaningful citizen involvement in the process of institutional reform is necessary in order to ascertain real needs, yet specialist language makes professional debates inaccessible to lay people. Similarly, it is difficult to get those in a position to enact change to even listen to people 'beneath' them, or outside their power structure. Power might be defined as being in a position where one can, with impunity, not listen to those who are unhappy with the system. In a society structured upon dominance relationships, people tend to listen only to those seen to be 'above' them in the social order.<sup>1</sup> As John Forester, in *Planning in the Face of Power*, explores this (communicative) dimension of Planning practice and discusses what progressive planners can do to compensate for those problems of 'distorted communication', and we need not replicate his discussion here.

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<sup>1</sup> This explains the difficulty feminists have in getting so-called women's issues on the political agenda. For example, while many men in Patriarchal society justifiably dissociate themselves from those who abuse women and children, few if any groups of non-offending men concern themselves with such issues. Instead, they organize to deal with men's own personal problems. See for example, Robert Bly, 1990, *Iron John: A Book About Men* (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element Books).

This listening disorder partly explains the tendency in the mainstream to reject green and feminist ideas without knowing what they are.<sup>1</sup> Green views are also excluded even when held by those in establishment positions. Greens are derided as feminine (whimps and cowards), and green economic alternatives (like women) regarded as 'airy-fairy' or of marginal relevance. (This is despite the fact that it is the mainstream economic system that is in fact built upon thin air, having no basis in ecological reality.) The same problems of communication exist in the environment and peace movements as well, which indicates how deeply hierarchical thinking is internalized. Thus, many greens, in turn, marginalize feminists in the movement.

Another problem is self-censorship. There have been barriers to the participation of mainstream ecologists and other scientists in political and ethical debates, partly because of the pretence of value-neutrality among many scientists,<sup>2</sup> and/or the adverse consequences that are thought to accrue to their 'professional standing' from political involvement. Professionals in and out of government are often prevented by their employers from speaking out on contentious issues.<sup>3</sup> Some scientists have run their own campaigns within their organization before leaking information; this can lead to environmental losses during the time that the information and debate is kept outside the public arena. Also, scientists who have taken an environmentalist stance have had their credibility smeared by being painted 'green' which, in our corporatist society, is tantamount to being 'unscientific'. In sum, then, the interdisciplinary and participatory decision making required for Planning reform is greatly impeded by a power-based social order.

But even when 'green' policies are taken on board a political bandwagon, the underlying philosophical orientation that produced them is usually not fully understood or integrated, and implementation is therefore usually partial or incomplete at best. There has not been a 'vocabulary' within the established disciplines that facilitates the recognition and articulation of new ecological insights and values. To use a well-worn example, the dominant culture has generally defined the value of nature as residing in its exploitation for human purposes. Therefore, the debate between environmental versus corporate interests in nature has been couched in economic and instrumental terms. While deep ecologists and ecofeminists have

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<sup>1</sup> In committees dominated by men, women feel their contributions are often ignored. See Carol Gilligan, 1982, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (MA: Harvard University Press).

<sup>2</sup> See for example Klaus-Peter Koepping, 1977, "The Ethics of Planning", in John S. Western & Paul R. Wilson, eds., *Planning in Turbulent Environments* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press) pp. 34-53, who criticized Noam Chomsky for taking a political position when he has the protection of the 'Ivory Tower'. As a scholar, Koepping says, "I have to distinguish and make clear to the outside world how much of what I say is scientifically defensible and how much of what I say is my own personal morality" (at p. 49).

<sup>3</sup> See generally Brian Martin, C.M. Ann Baker, Clyde Manwell and Cedric Pugh, eds., 1986, *Intellectual Suppression: Australian Case Histories, Analysis and Responses* (NSW: Angus and Robertson).

been working to develop a radically new conceptual prism and network of concepts, the assimilation of this into the broader culture is therefore very slow.

The communication problem goes even deeper than this, however. Language in itself can be ideological in serving to maintain the status quo. (I use 'ideology' to refer to a belief pattern that has become entrenched because it works to preserve certain power relationships in society).

There can be no doubt that political actors employ language (whole networks of concepts) for their own interests, particularly as these underwrite their status and legitimacy.<sup>1</sup>

Language can operate like a belief system to impede problem descriptions, analyses, or reforms that would pose a threat to the power structure. In fact, words can exclude certain concepts altogether through the narrow definition of terms. Our vocabulary tends to conceal forms of mischief that are endemic to institutions. One example mentioned earlier (Chapter 5) is the conception of 'corruption' as an attribute of people, not systems. But systemic corruption is also difficult to address because, when corruption is associated with individuals passing money under the table, it becomes almost synonymous with criminal intent or knowing malfeasance. This serves to exclude forms of moral indifference, neglect or failure to act which *stems* from structural pressures and power relations. These 'acts of omission', that result from institutional corruption are not addressed by professional codes of ethics. It is this amorphous area that must be directly addressed in Planning reform.

Metaphor, like words, can also limit our analysis. For example, the conception of an institution as a 'mechanism', that follows from liberal ideology, conceals or even encourages corrupt action or inaction on the part of individuals. As long as the institutional systems within which decisions are made are accepted as legitimate and value-neutral, few bureaucrats will take the initiative to identify and solve systemic problems. Most merely follow orders or 'second guess' the Minister. For example, a bureaucrat from the Department of Mines in Tasmania attended part of a seminar on mining put on by greens in 1991 and chastized them for not presenting their alternatives in terms of formal cost-benefit analyses.<sup>2</sup> The fact that his department would not release the necessary figures to the greens did not appear to trouble him. In accordance with the prevalent view in the Tasmanian bureaucracy he apparently felt it was the role of unpaid citizens to develop alternatives.

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<sup>1</sup> N.P. Low, 1991, *Planning, Politics and the State: Political Foundations of Planning Thought* (London: Unwin Hyman) at p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> The conference was "Minerals, Mining and Tasmania's National Estate", Phillip Smith Education Centre, Hobart, July 1, 1991.

Similarly, it follows from a mechanistic view of institutions that 'fair' decisions within a legal or Planning system are those that conform to a process considered legitimate, regardless of their outcomes. Thus, if an administrative agency or official follows social norms and precedents in decision making, the decision is (by definition) 'just', even if the consequences are not. The lack of accountability this metaphor engenders can only encourage the abuse of power.

Another related conceptual barrier to reform is that Planning is still largely conceived of as a technocratic and marginal project approval or decision-making process within the wider mechanism of governance. This distracts attention from the political character of the Planning system as an institution in society. While planners recognize that Planning *decisions* are ultimately political, in that they determine winners and losers, the Planning system itself is seen as a mere administrative function of government. Yet, as already argued, the Planning system has a political function in that it serves to transfer resources and wealth over time - often irreversibly. The problem is that, as long as Planning is regarded as a peripheral aspect of the public resource allocation system, environmentalists will continue to direct their energy at trying to reform the market and/or political systems, giving little attention to the intrinsic biases of the Planning system itself. In sum, terms, concepts, language and metaphor can serve to preserve the status quo and therefore protect or enhance the position of the powerful. One is therefore led to ask: why do people seem unable to find their way out of this proverbial paper bag? Some reasons cannot be found in the dualistic thinking that characterizes Patriarchal society.

### Dualistic thinking

In liberal Patriarchal society, where political life is portrayed as a contest, and where individuals are identified with groups or teams, there is a strong tendency for social choices to be presented in oppositional terms. The media, for example, seems incapable of presenting intricate political dynamics in terms other than simplistic, bilateral conflict between 'winners and losers'. This tendency of the media (a big business itself) to define things in terms of polar opposites is capitalized upon by political interests who seem to invest more resources in painting a demonic spectre of the other choice, than in spelling out the benefits of their own policies. Thus, in Tasmania, ex-Premier Robin Gray is actually re-elected with massive majorities on an 'anti-green' backlash, despite allegations against him of bribery, corruption, womanizing, and lying - a strong man who could deal with the threat of 'disorderly' greens (Appendix 1).

It is the powerful who are in a position to define the countervailing positions of their opponents. The green movement is thus portrayed as being against life quality and jobs.

Greens have continually pointed out that the 'jobs versus trees' argument is, if anything, quite the opposite of how it is portrayed, and that, even if sustainability means lower wages, "a good job is not worth much if one retires into an iron lung".<sup>1</sup> Greens have argued that public health problems and environmental pollution lead to profound economic inefficiencies and social dislocations. Nonetheless, saving the public environment is always portrayed as a trade-off against the individual's livelihood. The public interest is juxtaposed against the interests of the individual 'little guy', as if they were in essential conflict.

To win is to destroy one's opponent, therefore a whole range of alternatives are excluded from public discourse through, for example, stereotyping, negative associations or simply labelling the alternatives as 'fringe' views. The powerful are thus able to restrict debates to false choices, the most familiar of which are perhaps the false capitalist versus socialist and male versus female dichotomies. For example, Mrs. Dan Quayle (wife of the then United States Vice President) at her speech to the Republican Presidential Convention of August, 1992, referred to how women's 'essential nature' is to stay home and therefore that the opposition, in supporting women's rights, is against "family values"<sup>2</sup> By this logic, then, to be for women is to be against the family.

Political ideologies are also entrenched through the manipulation of dualistic thinking by those in a position to influence public discourse. Thus, pacifists are painted as 'militant' and pacifism is associated with disorder and instability, regardless of how chaotic and genocidal the existing system may in fact be.<sup>3</sup> This accounts for why the peace movement has always been portrayed as the 'enemy' within; the advocate of the evil empire. To be for peace is somehow to be unpatriotic.

This tendency to reinforce and manipulate dualistic thinking in the service of the status quo begins early. No malice or conspiracy is necessary. I can best illustrate this with an anecdote. I once overheard my young baby sitter harassing my (then) four year old child for expressing concern about butterflies dying-off due to chemical sprays, following a TV documentary which both had seen. The sitter said: "So what do you want, butterflies or food?" (no answer) ... "Tell me, which do you want? ... do you want to eat or starve?" (no answer) ... "which will it be?" After more of this kind of pressure, my daughter responded ingenuously: "Don't be silly, I don't have to choose one of those things". However, with the media continually

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<sup>1</sup> Jesse Jackson, keynote address, SEAC 'Catalyst' Conference, Urbana, Illinois, 5 October, 1990.

<sup>2</sup> An earlier quote by Vice President Dan Quayle sheds light on why his wife is intellectually satiated at home. She "has a very major cause and a very major interest that is a very complex and consuming issue with her. And that's me". Tama Starr, 1991, *The "Natural Inferiority" of Women* (NY: Poseidon Press) at p. 176.

<sup>3</sup> While 40 thousand people die each day of preventable disease and starvation when there are adequate food and medical supplies for everyone, it is the people who wish to change this state of affairs who are usually labelled radical and militant. See Paul Ekins, Mayer Hillman and Robert Hutchinson, 1992, *above* at p. 105.

presenting stark choices and painting an insecure future, and the dimming prospect of finding work in a Man-eat-Man society looms ever closer, many seem to have lost the capacity for this broader, common sense perspective.

The repertoire of ideas concerning Planning issues has been similarly limited by the creation of false choices. Common examples of this are the false 'environment versus employment' debate to the exclusion of ecologically-sound employment alternatives, or 'clean' nuclear energy versus 'dirty' fossil fuel to the exclusion of, say, solar power. Earlier, it was suggested that the main impediment to Planning reform is the 'Planning versus market' dichotomy. Both sides of the debate over whether there should be more or less Planning have accepted the association of the word 'planning' with 'intervention in the economy'. Because Planning is associated with 'command' economies or authoritarian approaches to social control, so-called 'free market' approaches to environmental problems (under such buzz words as deregulation and privatization) are perceived as somehow involving less social control. But the same question remains in the case of private as well as public sector control: "who controls the decision-maker?"

Within Planning theory as well, false choices impede the creation of positive new theories and alternative systems. Planning reform proposals have often concentrated upon centralizing or decentralizing, or privatizing or socializing, under the so-called 'simple decision rule': if things are not working, do the opposite. An example is the 'choice' between comprehensive versus incremental planning methods. The choice is ostensibly either being locked into an inflexible end-state plan or pattern of land use, as opposed to merely deciding among competing land uses when they are proposed. In reality, as we saw (Chapter 6), the two methods have very similar end results.

The perpetuation of the outdated decision-making framework for Planning is partly a result of the tendency for complex political issues to be presented as simple either/or choices. Tasmania provides an example of how power relations and dualistic thinking interact to impede genuine Planning reform. The debate over reform in Tasmania has always centred on two alternatives - more power on the part of Cabinet, and/or more power on the part of statutory authorities or commissions. This is curious because, at present, both (jointly and separately) negotiate deals with powerful development interests behind closed doors.<sup>1</sup> Yet, because of this false dichotomy, the issue has been portrayed as a matter of 'who' should formally decide.

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<sup>1</sup> Even in 1993, the Hydro Electric Commission is negotiating in secret with a large industry, Comalco, on their unit price of electricity. Comalco is threatening to go elsewhere if the subsidy is insufficient.

## Rational Man?

The third category of impediments to institutional reform relates to basic assumptions about the nature of Man. Because Man is by definition 'rational', we tend to believe rational arguments work. This belief, combined with the ability of the powerful to demonize the alternative to the status quo is one reason why Greens cannot win the case for alternative policies simply by making more reasoned arguments. Greens have offered sound reasoning for at least 30 years, but have nonetheless lost ground vis-a-vis the rise of corporate power. Why has reason been relatively ineffective? Let us consider a few possible contributing factors: (a) the nature of reason and mental processes themselves, (b) the power of political myths, (c) academic practice, and (d) professional ideologies.

### Reason

There is now evidence that the structures of reason and language actually shape the way the brain functions. If so, this would create a 'natural' tendency (in Western Patriarchy) toward dualistic thinking. Edward de Bono has popularized the current research in this area.<sup>1</sup> He has argued that the European conception of 'reason', dating back to the ancient Greeks, has contributed to the tendency toward unconstructive debate. However, perhaps because of his gender-blind perspective, he has failed to notice that 'reason' was deemed Man's greatest achievement because it was thought to set him apart from animals, nature, and woman (not an altogether rational motive).

The elevation of reason was made possible by a hierarchical, dualistic construction of reality and human nature that existed perhaps thousands of years earlier (as discussed in Chapter 10). But regardless of the (debatable) origins of the Western reason, it receives its legitimacy from the underlying Patriarchal cosmology.<sup>2</sup> As put by Pythagoras in the Sixth Century BC., "There is a good principle which created order, light, and man, and an evil principle which created chaos, darkness, and woman".<sup>3</sup>

Nonetheless, de Bono is certainly right that the (androcentric) conception of reason has been a pivotal source of problems. He has explained that Western reason is based on arguing according to a particular set of rules. The search for truth has been through argumentation; this means that we create mutually exclusive categories in order to apply our system of logic. And, in order to seek truth and/or win arguments, we choose perceptions, values, and concepts that

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<sup>1</sup> See Edward de Bono, 1990, *I am Right--You are Wrong. From this to the New Renaissance* (NY: Viking Penguin).

<sup>2</sup> Eastern cosmology is beyond the scope of this study, but women are also given an inferior status in religions such as Buddhism, Jainism, and Confusionism.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Tama Starr, 1991, *above* at p. 33.



fit that argumentative form of logic.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Western culture has become locked into a self-contained universe of discourse with a set of rules for thinking that excludes things like intuition, emotion, and feelings, and hence militate against green and feminist values.

## Myths

As de Bono also noted, ultimate 'truths' themselves cannot be questioned through the reasoning process, as they form the shared belief system or 'prism' through which the world is perceived. Early on, these 'truths' were in fact dogmas reinforced by the institutions of the powerful, such as the church, universities and so on. Likewise, today we have many unquestioned truths or myths that militate against reasoned arguments for environmental preservation. Some myths noted by Timothy Doyle, for example, are: 'history always repeats', 'the universe is infinite', and 'you can't stop progress'.<sup>2</sup>

Another example of a sacred truth which impedes the effectiveness of rational argument is the evocation of the idea of 'democracy'. This is often used very cynically. For example, several Western democracies, in the name of democracy, overthrew a popular socialist leader in Uganda, and installed Idi Amin in his place; yet, the fact that Uganda had such a ruler was often used in popular discussion to support the contention that Ugandans were not ready for self-government.

Yet another myth or cliché is that the public is not 'willing to pay' for cleaner or more appropriate technologies in the form of higher prices or simpler life-styles. Apart from the fact that the public has not really been given this choice, the argument evades the obvious, which is that the public pays for everything in the end. We pay far more in terms of social impacts and remedial costs than it would cost us to do things right in the first place. Cliché was also effective in maintaining the cold war for the benefit of the weapons trade and military establishments.

## Academia

Another reason for ineffectiveness of reasoned arguments relates to the exercise of power in academia. Academic success requires one to build upon past ideas. New concepts are not considered academically valid unless they relate to existing frameworks of thought and use the same (inaccessible) language. Even radical theories must first criticize former ideas within the same framework. Academics are thus forced to look inside existing theories and back in time. Likewise, as it is necessary for 'credibility' to cite the works of relevant theorists in the field,

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<sup>1</sup> Edward de Bono, 1990, *above* at p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Timothy Doyle, 1990, "The Pot at the End of the Rainbow: Political Myth and the Ecological Crisis", in Ken Dyer and John Young, eds., *Changing Directions: The Proceedings of Ecopolitics IV* (Adelaide: University of Adelaide) pp. 88-101.

many papers are surveys or recompositions of existing literature. The cumulative effect creates the impression of progress towards truth.

Similarly, to write acceptable theses, one must look at narrow topics that are focussed and easy to document and argue. Thus, one is encouraged to be reductionist rather than comprehensive. As a result, little is published that does not conform to biased rules of logic and sacred truths. It is important to learn from the past, but we need not be rooted in the past (This is in part a justification for the somewhat iconoclastic approach taken by this work.)

The reliance on past work has much to do with the nature of how power is exercised in academia. Those in a position to publish, teach, and so on (mostly men) benefit from the nature of power relationships on personal and/or political levels. Hence, academia is generally controlled by those whose power depends on the perpetuation of the theories to which they subscribe. To change their views is to admit they were wrong: something that can be costly to academic careers and egos. Consequently, academia moves in slow, incremental steps while environmental problems and power increase geometrically. It gradually incorporates ideas from other fields, or even radical social and environmental critiques, but only when they can be absorbed into the existing (liberal) framework. Thus, for example, feminists are still marginalized into women's studies programs and ignored by the mainstream. Women who want to participate in the male-dominated intellectual domain must to a large extent accept and/or internalize these values, language and logic of Patriarchy. In spite of the increasing integration of women into academia, then, feminist analysis has remained at the fringe. In short, despite the influence of lateral thinkers and iconoclasts, and the exposure of most people to ecological issues on television, there has been a remarkable resistance to the ideas of greens and feminists.

### **Professional ideologies**

Given the above, it is still unclear as to why professional and academic disciplines concerned with environmental planning would adopt, develop, or perpetuate ideologies that run counter to the *protection* of the environment? There are many reasons for this which, again, relate back to the Patriarchal social structure.

One reason to which I have referred is Masculine identification. The values associated with Masculinity, such as abstract and instrumental rationality, are elevated, while feeling, emotion, and intuition are denied. At the same time, paradoxically, the organization becomes a support network for men - a 'club' which engenders both loyalty and dependency. This bond is all the more significant because it is denied. The 'male-serving' behaviour in organizations is a non-rational one, which protects the institution from threats to the invisible value system. Women and feminine values are excluded because they threaten the very foundation of the social order.

Second, if a social system allows some to obtain undue power and influence, some will. These individuals are then in a position to provide social reinforcement and employment to

those who work within paradigms that are supportive of the dominant ideology. This is partly because of a phenomenon that B. F. Skinner called 'operant conditioning'.<sup>1</sup> People need recognition, and work that is not supportive of the powerful (or at least the dominant social ideology) tends to receive little backing, let alone funds.<sup>2</sup> Insecurity from, say, a lack of tenure or a zero-sum environment, increases this pressure to conform. Those in the environmental fields in particular have traditionally been on the defensive.

Another reason that ideologies are perpetuated is that professionals have invested much time and education internalizing the logic of a particular paradigmatic approach. There is thus a tendency to apply what they have learned to any problem, seldom to step outside their framework to question basic assumptions. This phenomenon has been called 'skilled incompetence' by Chris Argyris.<sup>3</sup> This is one reason why many ecologically-concerned professions are still wedded to concepts inspired by the dominant Patriarchal ideology which are not conducive to sustainability.

Finally, environmental problems were taken over by the traditional scientific disciplines and created a new opportunity for academic empire building. When it was subsequently realized that a transdisciplinary approach was needed, efforts in this direction were attacked by some traditional academics as sloppy, rather than as a search for new systems to make the approach more rigorous.

## Conclusion

The above is by no means all of structural, communicative, conceptual, or ideological impediments to reform. The sampling suggests, however, that fundamentally regressive aspects of the culture coincide with basic categories of ecofeminist analysis and blind spots in Manstream literature; namely, power-based relationships, dualistic thinking, and the myth of Rational Man. Although most people have experienced the kinds of phenomena listed above, surprisingly little has been written about the impediments to social and institutional change.

Based on the above points, the impediments to reforming the Planning system could be divided into two basic categories, those concerning the actor and those concerning the context. The first are personal/cultural barriers: the psyche, culture, and perceptions of individuals. I

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<sup>1</sup> B.F. Skinner argued that the 'literature of freedom and dignity', while enabling us to defend ourselves from those who would control us by punishment and coercion, makes us more susceptible to those who would control us with inducements and subtle indoctrination - advertizers, politicians, media, and entertainment. See B. F. Skinner, 1971, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (NY: Alfred A. Knopf).

<sup>2</sup> The examples of this are more obvious in disciplines that have application to peace and environmental issues. See generally Nicholas Hildyard, 1983, *Coverup: The Facts They Don't Want You To Know* (Kent, UK: New English Library), and Robert Jungk, 1976, *The Nuclear State*, trans. by Eric Mobacher (London: J. Calder).

<sup>3</sup> Chris Argyris, 1986, "Skilled Incompetence", *Harvard Business Review* 64 (5) pp. 74-79.

call this way of 'seeing' and 'being' the 'Power Paradigm' for short, as there is no existing term which expresses both levels of human relationships: content and process or (alternatively) ideology and behaviour. The second are social/structural barriers: the institutional and political forces operating outside the Planning arena, or power relationships generally, which I call Patriarchy for short. But, perhaps the biggest barrier to reform is that both structural and social change *must precede the other*; institutions reflect and reinforce culture, and culture reflects and reinforces institutions. An ideal Planning system - even if it could be designed - would stand little chance of acceptance, given the present Patriarchal construct and the power of CIMBIs, or military, industrial, capitalist concerns.<sup>1</sup> Thus, basic personal and social transformation is required.

Social change must therefore be of a truly 'radical' nature. To proceed, therefore, we must look deeper into the nature of human society for means to overcome impediments to institutional reform and social change generally. This takes us up to the point where radical environmentalism leaves off. The green movement recognizes that the sources of environmental problems are deeply rooted in modern cultures, and therefore fundamental social transformation is necessary if we are to preserve life on earth in any meaningful sense. The first task of social transformation is to find or develop an appropriate theoretical framework that could integrate structural, intellectual, and cultural influences on decision making, and to address squarely the problem of the abuse of power. In my own case, I began with the proposition that radical green philosophy and strategy is necessary to guide social transformation. However, I found Manstream green theory not yet adequate to deal with both dimensions of power, the intellectual/psychological and structural/systemic. I intuitively felt that feminism offered the best guide, because it theorizes power relations on both the personal and political levels. Nonetheless, only by implication did feminism analyze the relationship of society to the natural environment. I was therefore engaged for some time in the slow process of 'reinventing' an ecofeminist paradigm when I discovered it already existed. It is certainly *not* the only useful analysis, but I suggest it is the one most needed in the green movement (and perhaps that of other social change movements) at this point in time. In Part III, then, we explore ecofeminism in depth as a guide to personal and cultural change.

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of how power operates on a global scale, see Holly Sklar, ed., 1980, *Trilateralism: The Trilateral Commission and Elite Planning for World Management* (Boston: South End Press).

**PART III: SOCIAL CHANGE AND ECOFEMINISM**

## INTRODUCTION TO PART III

The purpose of Part III is to delineate and defend ecofeminism as a 'meta-paradigm' to guide strategies for social transformation generally. (This is not to advocate that everyone adopt a particular belief system.) Ecofeminism was introduced in Part I to make it possible to read Parts II and III independently, although their respective subjects - institutional and social change - are inseparable. Chapter 9 already provides a more in-depth explanation of ecofeminism. I only attempt to present one viewpoint, as I cannot speak for all ecofeminists. The balance of Chapter 9 is devoted to debunking the false stereotypes associated with ecofeminism which, unfortunately, remains a necessity.

Chapter 10 begins with an ecofeminist account of the evolution of Patriarchal consciousness, primarily to show that ecofeminism is not a-historic (a frequent claim), but in fact provides an interesting and comprehensive explanation for the origins of Western Patriarchy. It must be emphasized that this history is speculative and not an exclusive account. The bulk of the chapter is concerned primarily with the *analytical* problems of non-feminist, or 'Manstream', radical environmentalism. First, I show how androcentrism is implicated in the pathologies to which radical theories generally reduce the modern crisis. This is followed by a discussion on how environmental problems are obscured by a gender-blind analysis of environmental problems.

The *theoretical* problems of Manstream green theories are discussed in Chapter 11. In particular, I show how these green theories are also limited by the androcentric premises they hold in common with mainstream thought. The androcentrism of the New Right is also touched upon, but does not warrant serious theoretical analysis. I argue that radical green theories are unsatisfactory to the extent that they are *not* informed and broadened by a feminist perspective. In my view, feminism alone questions certain underlying assumptions shared by the mainstream, its radical critique, and the green movement generally.

I suggest that ecofeminism is a comprehensive paradigm that can fill in the gaps and add a whole new dimension to existing environmental theories. For example, mainstream green theory, because it centres on anthropocentrism, usually separates out militarism as a separate issue, although it is perhaps the most crucial environmental problem (why 'save' the natural environment only to have it 'nuked'?). Therefore, the second part of Chapter 11 is devoted to the links between militarism and Patriarchy. It serves to demonstrate how analyses and strategies based on the myth of Rational Man are of little *practical* use in addressing real world problems.

The *strategical* problems of Manstream approaches to social change are discussed in Chapter 12. I suggest that an ecofeminist paradigm not only provides insights into problem analysis, but guides action as well. That is, it provides a unity of theory and action ('praxis') which Manstream environmental theories lack - at least with regard to environmental issues. Problems related to Patriarchy also still plague the green movement itself impeding its effectiveness. Moreover, I question the idea that social movements can, by themselves, can bring about social change. A movement's value is in empowering and supporting activists, but too often activists are 'used' by leaders. A feminist approach is necessary if activists are to create a sustainable social movement. Finally, basic concepts to guide social and institutional change are then summarized.

## CHAPTER 9: ECOFEMINISM AS A NEW DIMENSION

### Unfolding ecofeminism

#### Other feminisms distinguished

Ecofeminism is what you get when you mix (deep) ecology, anarchical socialism, feminism and stir. For some it is a value system, a social movement and/or a practice, but for our purposes it offers a political analysis or paradigm through which to explore the links between androcentrism and environmental destruction with a view to developing means to bring about social change.

This is what distinguishes ecofeminism from other forms of feminisms (such as liberal, Marxist, radical, and socialist feminism), and the many individual interpretations of these positions.<sup>1</sup> Katharine MacKinnon has explained these prefixes by suggesting that liberal feminism is liberalism applied to women, Marxist feminism is Marxism applied to women, and radical feminism is feminism.<sup>2</sup> Along similar lines, I see ecofeminism as feminism taken to its logical conclusion. Contrary to the views of several academics who write about ecofeminism, my position is that there is one ecofeminist paradigm: a complete, self-contained thought system.<sup>3</sup> Ecofeminism builds upon the work of feminists in academic fields, but applies feminist analysis to the broader environmental problem, exploring the impacts of Patriarchal consciousness on non-human nature, and theorizing the problematic interrelations among self, society, and nature.

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<sup>1</sup> Susan R. Bordo and Alison M Jaggar, eds., 1989, *Gender/Body/Knowledge: Feminist Reconstructions of Being and Knowing* (N.Y.: Rutgers University Press).

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Judith Allen in a talk recorded by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, 1990.

<sup>3</sup> This is somewhat parallel to Arne Naess' view that while there is one deep ecology, each deep ecologist possesses his or her individual expression of it. Arne Naess, 1989, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, trans. by David Rothenberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). The division of ecofeminism into categories and factions is a gratuitous service to its opponents. Some papers which classify ecofeminism into categories include Karen J. Warren, 1993, "Introduction" (to Part Three: Ecofeminism), in Michael E. Zimmerman, ed., *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall) pp. 253-267; Plumwood, Val, 1986, "Ecofeminism: An Overview and Discussion of Positions and Arguments", *Australian Journal of Philosophy* 64 (June supplement) pp. 120-38; Carolyn Merchant, 1992, *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World* (NY: Routledge). Merchant does not even accord ecofeminism the status of theory, but instead relegates it to a section on social movements.



Another view, however, is expressed by Anne Cameron:

The term 'ecofeminism' is an insult to the women who put themselves on the line, risked public disapproval, risked even violence and jail.... Feminism has always been actively involved in the peace movement, in the antinuclear movement, and in the environmental protection movement. Feminism is what helped teach us all that the link between political and industrial included the military and was a danger to all life on this planet. To separate ecology from feminism is to try to separate the heart from the head.<sup>1</sup>

While I agree with this point, some feminisms are still anthropocentric, while ecofeminism is not. In addition, ecofeminism is *fundamentally* different from liberal feminism that has sought access for women into the existing power structure without challenging the nature of the structure itself. Ecofeminism is concerned with cultivating an ecological Ethic that goes beyond concepts of social justice alone.<sup>2</sup>

It has also been suggested that the prefix 'eco' is a sop to those Masculine-identified greens who cannot handle 'hard' feminism. However, in my experience, people have a harder time coming to terms with ecofeminism, as it strikes deeper into the core of Patriarchal reason. Some basic precepts to which most ecofeminists would subscribe are set out below. This chapter should clarify their meaning.

### Basic precepts and values

1) Fundamental social *transformation* is necessary. The underlying values and structural relationships of our Western Patriarchal culture need to be reconstructed. The promotion of equality, non-violence, cultural diversity, participatory decision making, and non-competitive and non-hierarchical forms of organization would be among the criteria for the new social forms.

2) Everything in nature has *intrinsic value*. A reverence for, and empathy with, nature and all life forms ('spirituality') is an essential element of the social transformation required.

3) Our anthropocentric viewpoint, instrumentalist values, and mechanistic models should be rejected for a more *biocentric view* that can comprehend the interconnectedness of all life processes.

4) Humans should not attempt to 'manage' or control non-human nature, but should work with the land. The use of agricultural land should be guided by an *ethic of reciprocity*.

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<sup>1</sup> Anne Cameron, 1989, "First Mother and the Rainbow Children", in Judith Plant, ed., *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism* (Ontario: Between the Lines) pp. 54-66 at p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Words used in a special way are capitalized.

5) Humans should intrude upon the remaining natural ecosystems and processes only where necessary to *preserve natural diversity*.

6) Power-based relationships and hierarchy must be supplanted by an Ethic based on mutual respect. Merely redistributing power relationships is no answer: we must move *beyond power*.

7) The dualistic conceptual framework of Patriarchy supports the ethic of dominance and divides us against each other, our 'selves', and non-human nature. The false dualisms that are based on the male/female polarity must be questioned (such as thought versus action, the spiritual versus natural, art versus science, experience versus knowledge).

8) We cannot change the nature of the system by playing Patriarchal power 'games'. To do so is to give credence to those who are directly involved in human oppression and environmental exploitation. We must therefore withdraw our power and energy from the Patriarchy (this does not necessarily preclude working 'in the system' to change it).

9) Process is as important as goals, simply because how we go about things determines where we go. As the power-based relations and processes that permeate our societies are reflected in our personal relationships, we must enact our values in both personal and political spheres.

10) We must change the ideology that says the morality of the (Female) private sphere has no application to the (Male) public sphere of science, politics and industry. We must rebalance the Masculine and Feminine in ourselves and society.

### **Problems of definition**

I have suggested only a working definition and some values associated with ecofeminism. This is because ecofeminism is not something that people are meant to 'convert' to. Rather, it can add a new *dimension* to anyone's individual perspective. Further, ecofeminism is not stationary. As a collective consciousness and social movement, as well as a paradigm, ecofeminism is continually evolving, as green thought should. There are several reasons why this is particularly true of ecofeminism. First, while Patriarchal movements have leaders, gurus, and experts, ecofeminism has none. If this ever occurs, it would be the warning bell of cooptation into Patriarchy. Consequently, the writings of academic ecofeminists cannot be said to represent the full breadth of ecofeminist thinking. The developing consciousness of women working at the 'grass roots' level for social change is therefore at least as valid a source of wisdom as are academic publications on the subject.

Second, theory and action are one, as ecofeminism is centrally concerned with developing a realistic praxis for changing the system of exploitation and domination over both humans and nature. In contrast, because Patriarchal philosophy stresses transcendent concepts (of either a

mathematical or metaphysical order), practice is often unrelated to, or out of sequence with, theory.<sup>1</sup> Ecofeminism is a mode of inquiry which attempts to examine our *actual* ways of thinking, relating, and acting, rather than applying abstractions to human behaviour. For example, it asks how ideas and actions affect nature, children, emotional needs, and human relationships (often called 'women's issues' in Patriarchal society). Differing opinions among ecofeminists and other greens can be more a sign of health rather than of division; it means that they have not stopped asking questions.

A third reason that feminist thought is continually evolving is that it has had to develop within the Patriarchal construct and language. As de Bono explains, perceptions and concepts that become frozen in language tend to control and limit our thinking, because "we may be able to see the world only in ways defined, packaged, and boxed by language".<sup>2</sup> The bias against non-human nature and non-Manstream values is deeply entrenched in our words and syntax.<sup>3</sup> The Power Paradigm is reflected in, and reinforced by, linguistic, religious, educational, theoretical, cultural, political, and economic institutions. Therefore, entirely new concepts and words must perhaps be created before we can internalize a new way of thinking.

In conclusion, because of the evolving nature of ecofeminism, and because it is eclectic (drawing upon and synthesizing ideas from ecological, feminist, critical social theory and elsewhere), I do not try to discuss the expanding literature on ecofeminism here. As Judith Plant says, "the strength of the ecofeminist movement lies in the fact that it did not emerge solely in the halls of academia, or the mind of one person or even one culture ...".<sup>4</sup> Therefore, my approach is to try to define one perspective while acknowledging the many varied and personalized styles within it.

Having prefaced this chapter with many qualifying remarks, it is now time to undertake a more in depth discussion of some of the concepts which ecofeminists are developing to better understand world problems.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, this explains why the controversy surrounding tree spiking and the recommendation of not alleviating aids or famine in the Third World has been associated with deep ecology, although deep ecologists do not generally advocate these positions. Abstract concepts, when superimposed on real world issues, can lead to inappropriate strategies or actions. See Dave Foreman and Bill Haywood, eds., 1989, *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*, 2nd ed. (AZ: Ned Ludd Books) and Edward Abbey, 1990, *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (UT: Dream Garden Press). Foreman repudiates his earlier position on aids and immigration in Murray Bookchin, Dave Foreman, Steve Chase, and David Levine, 1991, *Defending the Earth: A Dialogue between Murray Bookchin and Dave Foreman* (MA: South End Press).

<sup>2</sup> Edward de Bono, 1990, *I Am Right, You Are Wrong. From Rock to Water Logic* (London: Viking). It is not surprising, therefore, that - if de Bono's claim is correct - Western languages (evolving in Patriarchal cultures) are poor in expressing relationships.

<sup>3</sup> See Deborah Cameron, 1985, *Feminism & Linguistic Theory* (London: MacMillan Press).

<sup>4</sup> Judith Plant, 1989, 'The Circle is Gathering', in Plant ed., 1989, *above* pp. 242-253.

## Androcentrism, denial and dominance

There is a prevalent tendency among green activists and theorists to see anthropocentrism (human-centredness) as the primary force operating behind social and environmental problems, or, at least as providing the legitimation for the exploitation of nature. If this were so, it would follow that the means to create better societies would be through changing our perception of our 'selves' in relation to nature, or, as deep ecologists would have it, expanding our sense of identification to encompass all life, perhaps even 'Gaia' itself. One of the central arguments developed in Part III is that the adoption of a non-anthropocentric way of experiencing the world alone will not exorcise a more crucial pathology of our contemporary culture: the power-based morality and social structures, which pervade all levels of Patriarchal society, from personal to international relationships (power-based', again, refers to both dominance and hierarchy).

The adoption of a non-anthropocentric perspective would not make sufficiently visible the prism that shapes an exploitative attitude toward non-human nature. Androcentrism or male-centredness is a more crucial variable to address in theory and practice because it provides insights into the hierarchical structures and ethic of dominance that characterizes Patriarchal society. (For convenience, I refer to the power-based way of thinking, relating, and acting as the Power Paradigm, and to power-based social structures and relationships as Patriarchy.)

As explained in Part I, androcentrism refers to the fact that theories of society have been based on a Masculine stereotype of 'Mankind'. 'Humanity' evokes a picture of a single, autonomous male. In this portrait, 'community' is just Man in plural, 'nature' is just a backdrop for Man's activity, and 'women' are just a subset of Man. "All that is distinctly human is the male. The males are the race; the females are merely the sex told off to reproduce it" (Grant Allen, 1881).<sup>1</sup>

Within this androcentric world order, the Feminine is seen as incomplete, non-rational, or non-substantial, as if the Feminine were merely the shadow of humanity. By *subsuming* the Feminine principle under a Masculine model of Man, the Other is, paradoxically, excluded (the Other being other races, classes, nature, and women). Although individual men love individual women, women as a caste are often regarded as being of instrumental value:

Woman furnishes the soil in which the seed of man finds the conditions required for its development. She nourishes and matures the seed

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<sup>1</sup> Grant Allen, 1881, *The Evolutionist at Large*. Source: Tama Starr, 1991, *The Natural Inferiority of Women* (NY: Poseidon Press) at p. 28. *The Natural Inferiority of Women* is a collection of misogynist statements throughout the ages and across several continents.

without furnishing any seed herself. Thus man is never derived from woman, but always from man.<sup>1</sup>

The one-sided headset created by androcentrism has been compared to a frontal lobotomy.<sup>2</sup> Reason severed from emotion becomes irrational. The glorification of what has traditionally been seen as Masculinity is simply mal-adaptive in an age of toxic waste and nuclear weapons. It is this Masculine ego-centredness, more than human-centredness, that is behind the irrational ideas and behaviour displayed on the evening news. (Again, I use Masculine/Man as icons for concepts and values to which people of any sex can subscribe.) Ecofeminism seeks to redress this 'imbalanced' world view. I believe that ecofeminism is more rational because, for one reason, it is not engaged in denial. The Manstream is substantively irrational for the very reason that it is based on a false and limiting conception of reason.

Ecofeminism begins with the realization that the exploitation of nature is intimately linked to Western Man's attitude toward women, tribal cultures, and nature or, in Ariel Salleh's words, that there is a "parallel in men's thinking between their 'right' to exploit nature, on the one hand, and the use they make of women, on the other".<sup>3</sup> This is legitimized by Patriarchal cosmology which divides reality according to gender, and places a higher value on those attributes associated with Masculinity ('hierarchical dualism').<sup>4</sup> In such cultures, women have historically been seen as closer to the earth or nature (an idea reinforced by childbirth and menstruation). In the words of the poet Charles Baudelaire (1857): "Woman is nature, hence detestable".<sup>5</sup> Women and nature have been juxtaposed against mind and spirit, which have been associated in Western cosmology with the Masculine and elevated to a higher plane of being. As expressed by Otto Weininger: "a female genius is a contradiction in terms, for genius is simply intensified, perfectly developed, universally conscious maleness".<sup>6</sup>

That nature has generally been associated with the Feminine in our androcentric culture is not contestable.<sup>7</sup> This association of nature and women is a product of a Patriarchal

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<sup>1</sup> Paracelsus, 1530, *Man and the Created World* (Source: Tama Starr, 1991, *above* at p. 31).

<sup>2</sup> Brian Swimme, 1991, "How to Heal a Lobotomy", in Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, eds., 1990, *Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism* (S.F.: Sierra Club Books) pp. 15-22 at p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Ariel Salleh, 1989, "Stirrings of a New Renaissance", *Island Magazine* 38, pp. 26-31.

<sup>4</sup> See generally Karen J. Warren, 1987, "Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections", *Environmental Ethics* 9 (1) pp. 3-20, and Karen J. Warren, 1990, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism", *Environmental Ethics* 12 (2) pp. 125-146. Also Val Plumwood, 1986, "Ecofeminism: an Overview and Discussion of Positions and Arguments", *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 64 (June supplement) pp. 120-38.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Baudelaire, 1857, *Les Fleurs Du Mal* (Source: Tama Starr, 1991, *above* at p. 44).

<sup>6</sup> Otto Weininger, 1903, *Sex and Character* (Source: Tama Starr, 1991, *above* at p. 219).

<sup>7</sup> See generally Carolyn Merchant, 1990, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* Second Edition (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row).

cosmology and construction of reality, and has been used by Patriarchal society to justify the exploitation of both.<sup>1</sup> That is, nature, because it is associated with the Feminine (or *vice versa*), is deemed a lower order which exists to serve Man's<sup>2</sup> physical needs. Man sees Himself as not merely separate from, but *above*, nature and women, which He can therefore 'manage' or dominate.

To refresh our memory, the link between androcentrism and dominance relationships is this. Patriarchal societies prize that which is associated with Masculinity. Masculinity has historically been measured by powerfulness and autonomy - to be Masculine is to have power; to be *in control*. Because Masculinity is taken for full personhood and Masculinity is measure by powerfulness and autonomy, weakness and dependency has been seen as inferiority and grounds for unequal treatment. Also, since women are, by definition, what men are not, this makes women (again by definition) inferior, as women are less able to do what humans (read men) are distinguished for. This, when blended with a gendered construction of reality, makes a lethal potion - a sense of identity which depends on power and control over Others. As Karen Warren explains:

....patriarchal value-hierarchical thinking gives rise to a 'logic of domination'...which explains, justifies, and maintains the subordination of an 'inferior' group by a 'superior' group on the grounds of the (alleged) inferiority.<sup>3</sup>

This logic of domination is omnipresent, in part, because the belief that dominance relationships are normal is self-reinforcing. In a society based on dominance, according to Susan Griffin, it is often those most "severely ill with dominance disease" who get into power.<sup>4</sup> Further, the powerful (often 'power addicts') are in a position to adopt ideologies that suggest those on top are superior by virtue of their power and success. The self-reproducing character of dominance relationships is one reason why, in Susan Griscom's words, hierarchical dualism is "the most powerful conceptual link between the four modes of oppression" - racism, sexism, classism and 'naturism' (the abuse of nature).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Of course, there have been minority positions which have argued for a less mechanistic view of reality.. This has been traced in Merchant, 1990, *above*.

<sup>2</sup> Man is capitalized herein to refer to the dominant culture.

<sup>3</sup> Karen J. Warren, 1990, *above*.

<sup>4</sup> Susan Griffin, 1990, "Celebrating All Of Life", in Christopher Plant & Judith Plant, eds., 1991, *Turtle Talk: Voices for a Sustainable Future* (Lillooet, BC: New Society) pp. 50-57 at p. 53.

<sup>5</sup> Joan Griscom, 1981, "On Healing the Nature/History Split in Feminist Thought", *Heresies* 13 (4) pp. 4-9 at p. 5.

In the following chapters, it is argued that the abuse of power and denial of dependency (upon workers, women, mother, nature, oppressed races and so on) can best be understood in the context of the egocentrism engendered by Patriarchal society.

In spiritual terms, ego is defined as that which separates us from being, nature, the Goddess. Aspects of the ego are fear, the need to control and dominate, vanity, insecurity, dualistic thinking, excessive materialism, and a pathological need to be beyond the laws of nature.<sup>1</sup>

To heal the powerful psychological undercurrents created by thousands of years of Patriarchy requires rigorous social and self-conscious introspection. We must move beyond limiting conceptions of both the Masculine and Feminine in ourselves and our societies. This requires not only introspection, but a gender-conscious political analysis, because only through naming the invisible realities can we break "the silent conspiracy that upholds the status quo".<sup>2</sup>

Later we speculate about how Patriarchal consciousness evolved. Regardless of how it emerged, however, it is clear that a complex morality based on dominance and exploitation has developed in conjunction with the devaluing of nature and Feminine values. The association of women and nature has had tragic consequences for humans and the rest of nature. Some feminists have suggested, however, that this association can be converted into a positive by affirming so-called 'Feminine' values, such as caring, openness, and nurturing, and by moving beyond limiting and imbalanced conceptions of the Masculine and Feminine. This affirmation of the Feminine has been distorted by some who seem to fear that feminists will somehow take power and do what men have done.<sup>3</sup> This misconceives the central idea of ecofeminism. The very essence of ecofeminism is its challenge to the presumed necessity of power relationships. It is about changing from a morality based on 'power over', to one based on reciprocity and responsibility ('power to').

Ecofeminists believe that we cannot end the exploitation of nature without ending human oppression and vice versa. To do both, they reason, we must deconstruct the premises that associate Masculinity with 'power over' and challenge the Masculine model of 'Impersonal Man' upon which both mainstream theories and radical critiques depend. As we saw in Part II, non-feminist theories generally assume that the actors or decision makers are unaffected by (or, by virtue of their formal positions and responsible perspectives, somehow transcend) the personal and non-rational. Psycho-sexual drives, emotional needs, and personal politics are

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<sup>1</sup> Irene Javors, 1990, "Goddess in the Metropolis: Reflections on the Sacred in an Urban Setting", in Diamond and Orenstein, eds., *above* p. 211-214 at p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Margo Adair and Sharon Howell, 1989, "The Subjective Side of Power", in Judith Plant, ed., *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism* (Ontario: Between the Lines) pp. 219-26 at p. 222.

<sup>3</sup> In many seminars on ecofeminism which I have attended or given, men and even some women have expressed concerns that the alternative to Patriarchy is dominance by women.

ignored to the extent that they are incompatible with the archetypal male image. Ecofeminism, in contrast, explains Man's ecocidal behaviour in terms of *real* emotions and life experience, such as the importance of sexual identity, the fear of death, the link between personal worth and power, the repressed need to belong, and other expressions of personal insecurity. In Charlene Spretnak's words:

Identifying the dynamics - largely fear and resentment - behind the dominance of male over female is the key to comprehending every expression of patriarchal culture with its hierarchical, militaristic, mechanistic, industrial forms.<sup>1</sup>

I would suggest that the power drive relates back to basic emotional needs (such as love and sex) that have been repressed in Patriarchal culture. That is, the drive for power and prestige may ultimately, though seldom consciously, be an indirect means of obtaining sex and love. The denial of emotional needs has led to an excessive need for physical gratification and power, which leads on the social level to hyper-competition, conflict, and consumption.

### Differing diagnoses

Having defined ecofeminism in general, let us compare it to Manstream green theories. Ecofeminism is only one of several philosophies concerned with means to bring about social change by examining the underlying foundations of Western thought. Unlike the others, however, ecofeminism points to the importance of gender and androcentrism in maintaining the status quo. Gender-blindness is power-blindness. Gender-blind analyses serve to protect the power structure by making the ideological basis of exploitative relationships *invisible*.

Because of the refusal to consider the political significance of gender in the abuse of power as an important determinant of the modern crisis, green theory generally divides into competing analyses that focus on *symptoms*, such as industrialism, inappropriate technology, capitalism, competitive individualism, consumerism, or anthropocentrism. These 'pathologies', however, are linked by, and cannot be adequately theorized without, a gendered perspective. I stress that I am not claiming a reductionist priority for a feminist analysis over others. In other words, although ecofeminism has the capacity to unite radical green theory into one meta-paradigm, I do not necessarily advocate a totalist approach. My purpose is instead to show that while ecofeminism has been ignored and marginalized by the Manstream, it provides a complete paradigm that provides an account for the above symptoms. In my view, it offers a whole new dimension to either replace or inform radical social critiques.

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<sup>1</sup> Charlene Spretnak, 1988, "Ecofeminism: Our Roots and Flowering", *The Elmwood Newsletter* 4 at p. 1.



Although both Manstream greens and ecofeminists view the sources of environmental problems to be deeply rooted in the culture, their diagnoses differ. To discuss differences, we need to establish a typology. For purposes of this analysis, we can distinguish two basic orientations in the green movement, Masculinist and Feminist values, analyses and strategies. Manstream theory is that which disregards the political nature of gender. Because it is gender-blind, it retains some of the basic androcentric premises of mainstream theory and this impedes both green analysis and green strategy. Within Manstream theory, there are two basic strategical orientations: 'Leftist' or structure-oriented approaches to social change, and 'Liberalist' or actor-oriented approaches. Figure 12 links these to the orientations in Planning discussed in Part II.

It should be noted that while two basic orientations within the Manstream itself correspond loosely to left and liberal 'strategies' for social change, they do *not* correspond to left and liberal 'ideology' (hence I capitalize these new terms). The 'Leftist' approach is concerned primarily with changing the system itself. Generally speaking, ecosocialism and social ecology can be placed in this category. The 'Liberalist' approach takes the individual as a sovereign actor, and sees changing values and perceptions as the primary means toward a broader social transformation. This category includes deep ecologists, New Age thought and the majority of those called 'greens'. Of course, as Judith Plant reminds us, "we are the social system", so the split is one of emphasis.<sup>1</sup> Both orientations ultimately, though indirectly, rely on persuading enough people to change their beliefs and values with a view to changing political structures or public policy. Note that I do not regard 'revolutionaries' to be green at all - at least in terms of strategy - as any approach that could lead to violence threatens the environment and is thus unacceptable. For example, any violence can give 'red necks' the excuse to burn down a wilderness area that is under contention and/or frame activists for such things. An attempt was recently made to do just this in Tasmania.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Judith Plant, 1990, "Searching for Common Ground", in Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, eds., *above* pp. 155-61 at p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> March 11, just two days before the 1993 federal election and the same day the forest industry ran adds urging people not to vote green, a 'bomb' was planted beneath a railway line in Northwest Tasmania where greens were trying to protect the Tarkine Wilderness area. A sign nearby said "Earth First Save the Tarkine". The State Premier, Ray Groom, released a statement the next day condemning the use of violence by "extreme elements in the conservation movement". This was almost definitely a hoax to prejudice the greens chances for election. *Mercury* (Hobart), March 12, 1993, at p. 1 & 2.

Figure 12: Typology of Manstream positions

		Actor-oriented	Structure-oriented
Androcentric perspectives	Rationalists	Methodological orientation	
		Techniques for decision making	Systems thinking
	Pluralists	Implementation orientation	
		Pluralist politics	Progressive politics
	Manstream greens	Transformative orientation	
		'Liberalist' * personal	'Leftist' * institutional

\* Note: these terms apply to strategy only, not to ideology

I use the terms Leftist and Liberalist to convey the notion that green strategies and processes still reflect, in part, the mainstream approach to social change, even though the green movement presents a radical vision for new ecological societies. The old ways of bringing about social change no longer work. In essence, these approaches have involved rearranging or subverting power structures, or pushing for new policies within the old system, but they do not change the nature of that power structure or the forces which support it. Thus, one power-based social structure seems to invariably replace another.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, in the long term, any gains are pyrrhic.

Of the many shades of green thought, in my view, ecofeminism offers the most comprehensive and incisive socio-political analysis to guide both self and social transformation. Leftist green theories do not offer a framework that can adequately theorize the personal dimension of power; the Liberalist green framework cannot adequately theorize the structural dimension. Ecofeminism, I believe, contributes the necessary insight into the link between the abuse of power on personal and political levels which underlies both human oppression and environmental exploitation. On a theoretical level, an ecofeminist paradigm can help us to redress the historic split between experiential/individual (Liberalist) and critical/institutional

<sup>1</sup> This is amply argued in Marilyn French, 1985, *Beyond Power: Women, Men and Morals* (London: Jonathon Cape).

(Leftist) orientations. On a practical level, it can enable us to link environmental theory and practice, and to develop new strategies for social change.

### Deep ecology compared

Having distinguished the two orientations of Manstream thought, let us distinguish ecofeminism from what is a close ally and the dominant philosophical position in Manstream radical environmental philosophy: deep ecology. (Deep ecology is associated with the 'Earth First!' movement.) It must be emphasized in advance that the hard distinctions made here are for dialectical purposes and/or clarifying concepts. Individual viewpoints within these perspectives overlap and are not mutually exclusive.

Deep ecologist and other Liberalist greens consider the fundamental cultural pathology to be anthropocentrism. This, they believe, has led to the instrumentalist value system whereby things are seen to have worth only to the extent they serve people's material interests. Thus, what is necessary is a change in our human-centred way of experiencing reality. In my view, however, the focus on changing our anthropocentric way of experiencing or perceiving nature is inadequate, either as an analysis or as a program of action. Most ecofeminists believe that our way of relating or interacting - most particularly in dominance relationships - is more difficult to recognize and change than our intellectual awareness. A change in our perception, spirituality, or abstract constructs alone would not be sufficient to bring about the radical social transformation required. While human chauvinism must be overcome, this cannot be done without squarely addressing male-chauvinism - a culturally-encoded ego problem. For *therapeutic purposes*, the operative 'source' of environmental and social problems lies in the power-based morality and institutions of Patriarchy. In fact, anthropocentrism and instrumentalism can be understood as manifestations of androcentrism.

Another difference in emphasis is that deep ecology centres on the metaphysical, while ecofeminism centres on the mundane: relationships and processes. Deep ecology appreciates the sense of oneness, while ecofeminism appreciates plurality. The difference between the two approaches in this regard has been encapsulated by Freya Mathews:

Deep Ecology...takes a basically holistic view of Nature; its image of the natural world is that of a field-like whole of which we and other 'individuals' are parts. It encourages us to seek our true identity by identifying with wider and wider circles of Nature, presenting the natural world as an extension of ourselves, our Self-writ-large, as it were. Since on this view our interests are convergent with those of Nature, it becomes incumbent on us to respect and serve these common interests.

Ecofeminists, in contrast, tend to portray the natural world as a community of beings, related, in the manner of a family, but nevertheless distinct. We are urged to respect the individuality of these beings, rather than seeking to merge with them, and our mode of relating to them should be via open-minded and attentive encounter, rather than through abstract metaphysical preconceptualization. It is

envisaged that the understanding born of such encounters will result in an attitude of care or compassion which can provide the ground for an ecological ethic.<sup>1</sup>

Despite differences in emphasis, these two orientations can be viewed as complementary. Deep ecology is working towards a 'theory of ethics' which should be palatable to Masculine-identified environmentalists. It can contribute by providing a legitimation for a new environmental Ethic and for social change that is grounded within the tradition of individualism, but which deep ecologists hope to change. Ecofeminism, on the other hand, is concerned with the 'ethics of theory', or the links between theory and action. It can provide a conceptual basis for designing a new social/institutional Infrastructure and for guiding new strategies for bringing about social transformation. As long as deep ecology remains gender blind and detached, of course, there will be a gulf between these two orientations. Some reasons that a feminist analysis can be considered preferable are listed below.

First, changing our anthropocentric way of experiencing or perceiving nature is inadequate either as an analysis or a program of action, because an analysis focused on the *self* in relation to nature cannot adequately theorize power relationships within society. Such an analysis also distracts attention from power relationships at the personal level. It does not address the motives underlying power seeking behaviour as, in effect, it presumes behavioural problems can be simply transcended. Changing one's anthropocentric way of experiencing the world - an objective ecofeminists support - will not make visible the distortions in the prism that forms our attitude toward non-human nature and non-Masculine values.

Second, anthropocentrism cannot account for the lemming-like drive toward human extinction, which is hardly a human-centred policy.

Third, an analysis centred on anthropocentrism suggests a strategy based on *individual* change. It does not provide any ideas for institutional or systemic reform beyond that already implied by mainstream ecology.

Fourth, due to the gender-blind, androcentric analyses of Liberals and Leftists alike, they share with the mainstream the same strategy for social change. That approach is essentially an *appeal to reason*. Whether one is being urged to adopt a new spirituality or new structural organization, the strategy is to 'persuade' people that it is in their self-interest to change. These approaches have not worked (at least, not in proportion to the energy expended and results achieved). Social change is in our self-interest. However, I suggest that we are motivated by *emotional needs*, not concepts.

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<sup>1</sup> Freya Mathews, 1992, "Relating to Nature", in Ronnie Harding, ed., *Ecopolitics V: Proceedings* (Sydney: University of NSW ) pp. 489-496.

This reliance upon an appeal to reason which assumes environmentally-destructive behaviour is misdirected self-interest, owes to the fact that most greens still share some of the underlying premises of Patriarchal ideology. Because humanity is defined in theory as rational and self-interested (read Masculine), it is assumed that people can be persuaded by reason and motivated by (hopefully enlightened) self-interest. I will argue that this is why Manstream environmentalism is bringing about ecological awareness, but not basic behavioural change. Before we can proceed, we must address some false stereotypes that some have sought to identify with ecofeminism.

### Misconceptions about ecofeminism

As suggested above, an ecofeminist program means change, not only on the cerebral level (intellectual or experiential), but also on an interactive personal level. In this sense, therefore, ecofeminism is indeed a 'threat' to the Masculine identity and its entitlement to power on personal and political levels. (Of course, it is not a real threat, as people would presumably be better off in a more safe and egalitarian society.) Feminism strikes closer to home than other calls for social transformation. Evidence of defensiveness is in the refusal to hear what feminists are saying. Those who oppose nature preservation generally know what the arguments of environmentalists are, but are unmoved, or exercise denial. However, many who feel threatened by feminism react with hostility without ever asking what it is. (The experience of many women in the green movement with whom I have spoken on the subject is that feminism is more threatening to men than environmentalism.)

Not surprisingly then, it has been falsely stereotyped to the extent that most debates about ecofeminism revolve around projections upon it, rather than matters of substance.<sup>1</sup> So before going further, I will review some of the stereotypes and problems of definition that this new paradigm faces. Perhaps foremost among these have been false assumptions about feminism that are transposed onto ecofeminism. These are that ecofeminism: (1) is dualistic, (3) 'homogenizes' women, (3) female chauvinist, (4) partial or incomplete, (5) essentialist or biologist,<sup>2</sup> (7) anti-male, (8) only about equal rights, (9) a power grab, and finally, (10) anti-rational. However, in each case, it is not ecofeminism, but rather Patriarchal theories, to which these adjectives should be applied.

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, Susan Prentice, 1988, "Taking Sides: What's Wrong with Eco-feminism?", *Women and Environments* (Spring) pp. 9-10; Janet Biehl, 1988, "What is Ecofeminism?", *Green Perspectives* 11 (October) pp. 5-6; Biehl, Janet, 1991, *Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* (Boston MA: South End Press); Dolores LaChapelle, 1989, "No, I'm not an Eco-feminist: A Few Words in Defense of Men", *Earth First!* 9 (4) pp. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> Essentialist refers to women having an 'essential' or biologically-based nature.

## Dualistic?

The fact that some writers have stressed difference and women's special relationship to nature has caused ecofeminists to be accused of being sexist and dualistic.<sup>1</sup> However, it is the ecofeminist *problem analysis* that is gender based. The fact that ecofeminists think that militarism and environmental destruction are partly traceable to gender imbalance and Patriarchal consciousness does not mean a women's identification as a female takes precedence over her identification with non-human nature, community or family.

Nor does it mean that anyone is suggesting the liberation of women would solve the environmental problem. In fact, no one can be meaningfully liberated within a Patriarchal culture. Rather, ecofeminism takes the position that the culture has devalued so-called Feminine attributes (caring, nurturing and sharing), and this that has contributed to the dualistic thinking that pervades Western thought, such as the glorification of the 'hard' sciences over creative fields.

To suggest that it is dualistic to focus on gender divisions in society is reminiscent of the 1950s in the United States, when many tried to pretend they could not see the colour black as this would be 'racist'. Implicit in this 'colour blindness' however, was the chauvinistic idea that Afro-Americans must want to be like whites, the 'norm', and since they could not be the same colour, whites should pretend they could not see the difference.

## Homogenizes women?

The misunderstanding that ecofeminism is dualistic may derive from the suggestion by ecofeminists that alternatives to Patriarchy are possible, as evidenced in women's (and some tribal) cultures.<sup>2</sup> This has led some to construe ecofeminists as conceiving of women as a 'homogeneous whole' (in opposition to men) without making adequate distinctions between different races, nationalities, or classes, and so on. This would contradict ecofeminist theory by creating an oppositional relationship based on sex. This would also run counter to the affirmation of cultural diversity by ecofeminists - and by most greens, for that matter.

The diversity of women and their experience is certainly not denied by ecofeminists. In fact, this diversity is celebrated and seen as a cause for optimism: diversity is vital in the effort to bring about social change. However, women "are learning to recognize their sisterhood under the skin, and know there are many different ways of being victimized".<sup>3</sup> (This is not to

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<sup>1</sup> See Warwick Fox, 1989, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels", *Environmental Ethics* 11 (1) pp. 5-25 for a critique of ecofeminism through an androcentric prism.

<sup>2</sup> See Ngapare K. Hopa, 1989, 'Papatuanuku' 'Spaceship Earth', *Ecopolitics V Conference Proceedings* (University of Adelaide) pp. 574-580.

<sup>3</sup> Barbara G. Walker, 1985, *The Crone: Woman of Age, Wisdom, and Power* (S.F.: Harper & Row) at p. 6.

overlook the fact that women, as well as men, can be part of the problem as many women are directly involved in the oppression of others.)

The notion that women could have some similarities in experience and consciousness across national and class boundaries, due to certain shared conditions, is especially troublesome to those who reduce social problems to the existence of classes.<sup>1</sup> This is ironic, as the idea that workers in different industries, cultures, or nations could have a similar consciousness is essential to a class-based analysis.<sup>2</sup> The reality is that men of all classes use and take for granted power over women within their class, work-place, political party, or family structure, even - or especially - when power in the public arena is denied to those men. This is evidenced by the fact that violence toward women is fairly universal in Patriarchal societies and does not differ significantly across class boundaries.<sup>3</sup>

### **Female chauvinist?**

Is reference to women's shared experience potentially discriminatory? Some project upon ecofeminists the false stereotypes fostered by the male-dominant power structure and media: feminists are portrayed as Masculine and aiming simply to reverse things. The impression is often given that ecofeminists believe that women have a special closeness to nature through child birth, menstruation, and so forth (a position that is inconsistent with an ecofeminist paradigm). However, these claims are not made to simply supplant men in the existing cosmic and mundane hierarchy based on sex. The purpose of such observations relates to the ecofeminist action orientation. Ecofeminists are concerned with how to get from here to there - a society in harmony with nature. To that end, affirming women and their experience is a crucial step. There is a practical need to empower rather than degrade women because, having a different vantage point, they are well placed to create new models, strategies and approaches.

While there are Masculine-identified women who emulate male processes and ways of relating, feminists are increasingly suggesting that society would be improved if we rebalanced the Masculine and Feminine. This does not mean however that feminists are proposing an androgynous culture. As Ivan Illich has suggested, the differentiation between male and female perceptual frameworks provides an important dialectic for cultural development.<sup>4</sup> In any case, the fear of creating a society that is over-balanced toward the Feminine principle, in a nuclear age, is somewhat unrealistic.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, this was frequently expressed in several workshops at the Socialist Scholars Conference, July 18-21, 1991, University High, Melbourne.

<sup>2</sup> Ariel Salleh, 1991, "'Essentialism' - and Eco-feminism", *Arena* 94, pp. 167-173 at p. 169.

<sup>3</sup> Diana E. H. Russell, 1989, "Sexism, Violence, and the Nuclear Mentality", in Diana Russell, ed., *Exposing Nuclear Phallacies* (NY: Pergamon Press) pp. 63-73.

<sup>4</sup> See generally Ivan Illich, 1982, *Gender* (NY: Pantheon).

Some are put off by the name itself, as it seems to exclude men or not be 'broad' enough. Why is it that when one adds a feminist perspective to Manstream thought, the latter becomes more narrow? (The answer is that it does not.) If people are put off by the term, one might well ask "what were they doing before they were put off?" If one cannot get beyond the threshold issue (affirmation of the feminine) then one probably cannot relate to ecofeminism by any other name. The name simply expresses the idea that it merges ecological and feminist analysis. But there is also a practical consideration: if men cannot 'own' the term, they cannot re-interpret it into a Patriarchal construct.

### **Partial or incomplete?**

Ecofeminism has also been portrayed as partial or incomplete, as if it were the shadow side of a 'real' theory. It seems partial because, in misogynist cultures, things concerning women are peripheral. But why is it that so many fields of knowledge that are primarily of concern only to men do not seem incomplete or partial? I later argue that ecofeminism is a complete value system and analysis which provides an alternative (or new dimension) to Manstream philosophies for both men and women.

Similarly, in some circles, value systems of women and tribal peoples are still regarded as childlike, or unworthy of the term 'culture'. However, aboriginals and women are credited with a separate experience and value system when this is useful as a basis for asserting control over them, and only denied them in order to delegitimize these groups or their claims. When women begin to evince self-esteem, they are accused of essentialism or reverse sexism. (The arrogance of labelling the idea that women could have thoughts or experience of their own as 'sexist'!)

We must ask why women are often perceived as a 'minority' group by policy makers, although they are the majority.<sup>1</sup> This is not because women have only 1 percent of the world's property.<sup>2</sup> It is arrogance born of androcentrism: things outside the male experience are not important. Therefore, in the dominant political orthodoxy, women and children are seen as an interest group, while the Patriarchal establishment (at least unconsciously) is equated with society in general. For example, some environmentalists believe that if we solved the problems of 'sustainable development' and conservation, the interests of women and children would be improved, or at least could then be attended to.<sup>3</sup> But this argument has never worked in the social change movement, and never will, because it relies on a group of 'haves' to take care of a group of 'have nots'. It reinforces 'hierarchical dualism'.

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<sup>1</sup> The rhetoric often refers to women and children, of course, as in the case of men needing jobs in the forest industry to support women and children.

<sup>2</sup> See generally, Ruth L. Sivard, 1987, *Women ... A World Survey* (Washington DC: World Priorities).

<sup>3</sup> Feminists in the green movement have often been regarded as a 'faction', despite women being the majority.



## Essentialist or biologist?

The major attack against ecofeminism, however, has been that it allegedly claims that women possess an essential nature - a biological connection (biologist) or a spiritual affinity with nature (essentialist) that men do not.<sup>1</sup> While perhaps some women believe this, it is not a concept relevant to ecofeminism as such. In the first place, 'essentialism' would be inconsistent with the logic of ecofeminism, let alone mainstream ecology. After all, as Ynestra King and others have explained, since all life is interconnected, one group of persons cannot be closer to nature.<sup>2</sup> The assertion of 'difference' is based on the historical socialization and oppression of women, not biologism. If gender is shaped by culture, ideology, and history, and how one experiences nature is culturally-mediated, then gender-conditioning would tend to shape our experience of nature.

The accusation that ecofeminism is essentialist, I believe, results from a Patriarchal way of thinking. It presupposes the legitimacy of the Patriarchal construct that sees nature as separate from culture. As Joan Griscom explains it:

... The question itself is flawed. Only the nature/history split allows us even to formulate the question of whether women are closer to nature than men. The very idea of one group of persons being 'closer to nature' than another is a 'construct of culture.'<sup>3</sup>

In the second place, whether women are 'closer to nature' or generally experience nature differently is a purely academic question. We cannot know if gender differences are due primarily to genes, hormones, an essential nature, culture, or the division of labour.<sup>4</sup> But this is not the issue. What matters is that men and women have shown the conscious capacity to choose other values and behaviour patterns. We have seen women adopt 'Masculine' personal processes to varying extents when they wish to be part of a power structure and, more optimistically, we have seen some men become caring, gentle, and non-dominating. In short, men can subscribe to ecofeminism, and, in fact, their cooperation is necessary if we are to save the planet.

A related notion is that ecofeminists see the Feminine and Masculine as *unchanging* over time as well as among cultures. This rests on the assumption that ecofeminists, as women, are

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of women's special relationship to nature, see Susan Griffin, 1978, *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (S. F.: Harper & Row).

<sup>2</sup> Ynestra King, 1981, "Feminism and the Revolt of Nature", in *Heresies* 12, pp. 12-16.

<sup>3</sup> Joan L. Griscom, 1981, "On Healing the Nature/History Split in Feminist Thought", *Heresies* 13 (4) pp. 4-9 at p. 9. See also Sherry B. Ortner, 1974, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?", in Michele Z. Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, eds., *Woman, Culture, and Society* (CA: Stanford University Press) pp. 67-87 at p. 87.

<sup>4</sup> See generally Carol Gilligan, 1982, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (MA: Harvard University Press).

simple minded. Again, this charge has come, ironically, from many socialists who have doggedly persisted in portraying the working class as a feature of society which has remained unchanged. Both class and gender are significant factors in any analysis of oppression.

Similarly, at several conferences, I have heard ecofeminists accused of seeing nature also as an unchanging, mystical whole somewhere 'out there'. This would be incompatible with the basic precepts of green thought, which stresses our interconnectedness and interdependency with nature.

It has become fashionable in some circles to regard 'nature' as nothing but a construct of culture and thus to disparage ideas like 'interdependency with nature' as myth. However, I believe that the idea of nature being merely a construct of culture is itself a construct of culture. Obviously, constructs of culture can only be evaluated in terms of their impacts, not in terms of higher truths. The idea that nature is merely a construct of culture is a myth with dangerous ideological implications.

### **Anti-male?**

Ecofeminism has also been confused with 'separatism' and seen as anti-male.<sup>1</sup> While some feminists may believe in working separately from men, feminism in general is not 'anti-male'. It is only critical of the power-based culture and value system which is male-dominated. In fact, most feminists believe that Patriarchy oppresses men as well, and prevents them from developing their full potential as self-aware, caring humans. Both men and women live in a Patriarchal society and therefore both, to varying extents, internalize the Patriarchal value system. Indeed, this is one reason why some women feel that it is necessary to function outside the male-dominated sphere.

It is regularly stated that "women are just as bad: take Margaret Thatcher". Of course, there are women who have chosen to be co-opted into the Patriarchy and are even actively involved in the exploitation of other humans and nature. In fact, one can argue that the 'victims' of violent domestic relationships participate in a two-way process, if only because they believe they have no choices. But such notions confuse blaming with problem solving, and confuse sex with gender (the social significance of the male/female polarity, not biology).

Moreover, from a gender-based analysis, the Margaret Thatcher syndrome makes sense, because it serves to reinforce power relations while obscuring them. As Cynthia Enloe explains:

...when a woman is let in by the men who control the political elite it usually is precisely because that woman has learned the lessons of masculinized political behaviour well enough not to threaten male

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Dolores LaChapelle, 1989, *above*.

political privilege. Indeed she may even entrench that privilege, for when a Margaret Thatcher or Jeanne Kirkpatrick uses her state office to foment international conflict, that conflict looks less man-made, more people-made, and thus more legitimate and harder to reverse.<sup>1</sup>

### Rights-based?

Feminism has never been about rights alone, but about our collective and individual responsibilities. However, in our liberal political system, it is still only possible to get equal rights on the agenda. More fundamental issues of environmental Ethics do not get a hearing. The dominant reformist paradigm is essentially *egalitarianism* (as is most Manstream green philosophy). Thus, Manstream thought can contemplate ideas like equal rights for different races, sexes, generations and species, more easily than the abandonment of Masculine values such as power, individualism and control upon which inequality is based.<sup>2</sup>

Equal rights for women is only a part of the feminist agenda. Empowerment ('power to' and 'power with' rather than 'power over') for women is not an end, but a *means* to the social transformation required. In fact, while there are 'liberal feminists' who essentially support the existing system, they believe that equal rights for women would lead to a better life quality for men as well.

### A power grab?

Ecofeminism also has to wear the false stereotypes attributed to feminism generally. This includes the fear that feminism is a power grab by an exclusionary minority group. Many have resisted ecofeminism on the assumption that the alternative is 'matriarchy' - by which they mean a *transfer of power* to women. But few if any are seriously proposing matriarchy. In any case, matriarchy would not mean female 'rule', but rather a partnership model.<sup>3</sup> To the contrary, as said above, ecofeminists believe that we must move away from *the fact of* power-based relationships and move towards an Ethic of care and mutual respect. Indeed, this is the 'womandate' of ecofeminism.

It is not, after all, ecofeminism that creates power relations based on sex: Patriarchy does. To accuse feminists of the same is merely to kill the messenger. Ecofeminists, in contrast, call for less limiting and monolithic conceptions of humanity, and this cannot be achieved without men's cooperation. (Perhaps some of the resistance to ecofeminism in environmental circles is

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<sup>1</sup> Cynthia Enloe, 1990, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press) at p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> For an interesting discussion (in lay terms) of male and female psychological attributes, see Herb Goldberg, 1979, *The New Male: From Self-Destruction to Self-Care* (NY: William Morrow and Co.), and Herb Goldberg, 1987, *The Inner Male. Overcoming Roadblocks to Intimacy* (Ontario: New American Library).

<sup>3</sup> Riane Eisler, 1989, *The Chalice and the Blade* (Harper and Row).

the fear that some men have of losing control, academically or professionally, over the environment movement as a power base.)

### Anti-rational?

Finally, ecofeminism is not anti-rational but rather highlights the patent irrationality of Patriarchy, and the Masculine model of (rational) Man upon which most mainstream theories and radical critiques are based. Ecofeminist is substantively rational. Despite its political analysis, ecofeminism is visionary and shares with deep ecology and spiritual ecology the advocacy of a 'spiritual' appreciation of nature,<sup>1</sup> identification with nature, and a reverence for life processes without regard to their usefulness to humans. However, ecofeminism is not a religion and ecofeminists are not trying to 'convert' people, as they advocate cultural and religious diversity. In their view, people of any belief system can take on board the ethical and political insights it offers. Even Starhawk, who is on the spiritual wing of ecofeminism would agree:

Earth-based spirituality influences ecofeminism by informing its values. This does not mean that every ecofeminist must worship the goddess, perform rituals, or adopt any particular belief system.<sup>2</sup>

The denial of the apparent spiritual needs of most people is potentially as dangerous as the other extreme; religious dogmatism and/or superstition. Something, it seems, will always fill a spiritual vacuum. A reverence for life processes and a deep sense of interconnectedness with all life forms such as that encouraged by ecofeminism is not soon likely to become Patriarchal in nature. Even so, the honouring and healing of the earth would come as a welcome relief from bearing witness to the tiresome incantations of economic rationalists on the fantasy of unlimited growth, the atrocious icons of Masculinity erected by developers, or the cruel, sacrificial rituals carried out by militarists.

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of spiritual ecology, see Nollman, Jim, 1990, *Spiritual Ecology: A Guide to Reconnecting With Nature* (NY.: Bantam Books). "Spiritual" can mean very different things, from respect for natural life processes to a religious conception. For an example of the latter approach see Charlene Spretnak, 1986, *The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics* (NM: Bear & Company) which attempts to show how religion can be 'greened'. See also Charlene Spretnak, 1991, *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age* (N.Y.: HarperSanFrancisco).

<sup>2</sup> Starhawk, 1989, "Feminist, Earth-based Spirituality and Ecofeminism", in Judith Plant, ed., *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism* (Ontario: Between the Lines) pp. 174-185 at p. 174.

## CHAPTER 10: PATRIARCHAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND MODERN PATHOLOGIES

Having discussed what ecofeminism is and is not, let us look at what ecofeminists see as the most significant tributaries of the modern crisis. We cannot be sure of the origins of the conceptual link between the domination of women and nature, as they are prehistoric. How the drive for power and control over both the social and natural environment may have developed has been postulated in various theories, but a review of these is beyond the scope of this Chapter. Such theories have been necessarily partial, unravelling patterns on different philosophical, socio-political and psychological layers of society.<sup>1</sup> However, the presumption of a linear cause and effect relationship in the interplay of social phenomena is a legacy of the Patriarchal mindset. The objective of the ecofeminist project is *not* to construct all-embracing explanations of a complex historical evolution. Because it is centrally concerned with the links between theory and activism, the purpose of ecofeminist theory construction is to find ways that will enable activists to invest their energy in the right direction.

Although one cannot know the origins of Patriarchal structures and values, it is nonetheless useful to show how Man's antithetical relationship with women and nature, and Man's penchant for dominance relationships, *could* have become institutionalized. Ecofeminism provides a plausible account of how the Power Paradigm might have evolved in Europe. I will sketch a few of the thoughts that some ecofeminists have offered on this subject. I only discuss Eurocentric cultures because they are so greatly implicated in the problems of modernity - industrialization, colonialism, and so on.

### Evolution of dominance relationships

The male monopoly on hunting weapons was perhaps the first factor in the development of institutionalized dominance relationships. Weapons enabled sporadic raids and slavery. This meant early forms of wealth accumulation and exploitative social relations.<sup>2</sup> When militarism became a means of production, as it did in many early societies, slaves were important

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion on the different types of explanations for the evolution of the Patriarchal paradigm, see Val Plumwood, 1986, "Ecofeminism: An Overview and Discussion of Positions and Arguments", *Australian Journal of Philosophy* Vol. 64 (June supplement) pp. 120-38.

<sup>2</sup> See Maria Mies, 1988, "Social Origins of the Sexual Divisions of Labour", in Maria Mies, Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen and Claudia Von Werlhof, 1988, *Women: The Last Colony* (London: Zed Books).

components of the economy. This meant that ideologies and values that encouraged men to become good soldier material would develop by 'natural selection', if not by deliberate manipulation by tribal leaders. Perhaps foremost among these instrumental beliefs would be the devaluing of life and the denial of one's emotions and feelings.

Another major factor was the development of agriculture some eight to ten thousand years ago.<sup>1</sup> For the first time, there was a surplus of food which allowed larger groupings of people, priesthods, and eventually city and state administrative hierarchies to develop. Early societies had been domestic societies, structured around the work of women. However, with the development of agriculture came a surplus which allowed for cities and the division of labour. Men came to monopolize the increasingly hierarchical public sphere, while the domestic, private sphere occupied by women became more isolated and more subject to male dominance as well (to be later reinforced by industrialism). Logically, if not historically, the domination of men over women preceded the domination of men by men, which in turn preceded the domination of humans over nature.<sup>2</sup>

According to Rupert Sheldrake, the development of agriculture also heralded a 'narrower' conception of Mother Earth as a goddess of vegetation and harvesting.<sup>3</sup> Evidence of the displacement of earth-based spirituality by Patriarchal monotheism in the near East is found from around 5,000 B.C. The metaphorical separation of the heavens from the earth was a cosmological division that was closely linked to the opposition of Man to women and nature. For example, in a Mesopotamian creation epic of the Fourth millennium B.C., nature was a female monster of chaos that was killed by an urban hero-god who then divided her body into two halves which become the sky and earth.<sup>4</sup> Charlene Spretnak writes that:

Our separation from nature began around 4500 B.C. with the IndoEuropean invasions of nomadic tribes from the Eurasian steppes, who replaced the nature-based and female-honoring religion of the Goddess in Europe, the Near East, Persia, and India with their thunderbolt god, removing that which is held sacred and revered from the life processes of the Earth to the distant realm of an omnipotent male sky-god.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See generally Evelyn Reed, 1975, *Women's Evolutions: From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family* (NY: Pathfinder).

<sup>2</sup> Murray Bookchin, 1989, *Remaking Society* (Montreal: Black Rose Books) at p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> Rupert Sheldrake, 1991, *The Rebirth of Nature: The Greening of Science and God* (N.Y.: Bantam Books) at p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> J. Donald Hughes, 1991, "The Psychology of Environmentalism: Healing Self and Nature", *The Trumpeter : Journal of Ecosophy* 8 (3) pp. 113-117.

<sup>5</sup> Charlene Spretnak, 1988, *above* at p. 7. See also Marilyn French, 1985, *Beyond Power: Women, Men and Morals* (London: Jonathon Cape) at p. 341.

As Marilyn French points out, the rise of this transcendent male god was also linked to the development of the worship of power.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the new sky-god was a deification of power. The projection of a powerful male sky-god may have reflected fear and denial of death and the consequent striving for immortality. A male Creator represents a denial of dependency upon the mother and the Earth. One needs power to supplant needs that one is denying. Man's effort to distance Himself from all that was associated with women, earth and nature may have been partly because it reminded him of his own mortality. In fact, anthropologists have suggested that the early ziggurats and pyramids were perhaps literal attempts to reach the sky. The domestic sphere of women thus came to be seen as lower than male-dominated religious and cultural life.

The life of women and slaves was a life determined by necessity. Although the elite were dependent on both for their material existence, ideologies developed which denied this dependency and rationalized the master-slave relationship. In Plato's work, for example, God or the Cosmos became the expression of reason, and nature became Chaos, the realm of necessity. Reason was conceived as a means of ordering and regulating the irrational, sensory world, just as the mind was conceived as controlling the body, and the master as controlling the slave.

Val Plumwood suggests that Plato's philosophy was self-serving in providing a rationalization not only for the master, but for the rise of an intellectual elite (to which Plato belonged) which accompanied the development of a written culture.<sup>2</sup> His philosophy, which invested meaning in the realm of abstract ideas and divested meaning from nature, served to replace the view of death as a tragic spectre for one glorified as a completion of the separation of body and soul. As well as being attractive to both soldiers and slaves by giving them hope for a better realm after life, it therefore met the instrumental needs of the military state.

Although in the 'dark ages' there was a return to a more naturalistic view of life, this dichotomous view of earth/chaos and sky/cosmos was reinforced and further entrenched by European androcentric theology and religious hierarchies. As Rosemary Radford Ruether explains:

Patriarchal religion split apart the dialectical unities of mother religion into absolute dualism, elevating a male-identified consciousness to transcendent apriority. Fundamentally this is rooted in an effort to deny one's own mortality, to identify essential (male) humanity with a transcendent divine sphere beyond the matrix of coming-to-be-and-passing-away. By the same token, woman become identified with the sphere of finitude that one must deny in order to negate one's own origins and inclusion in this realm. The woman, the body, and the

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<sup>1</sup> Marilyn French, 1985, *above* at p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Val Plumwood, personal communication.

world were the lower half of a dualism that must be declared posterior to, created by, subject to, and ultimately alien to the nature of (male) consciousness, in whose image man made his God.<sup>1</sup>

The basis of Man's attempt to control nature, then, was "the quest to become divine, immortal, incorruptible".<sup>2</sup> In this sense, Man's effort to overcome the inevitable - death - was through self-delusion. French speculates further that when Man discovered his role in pregnancy, He could begin to see women as mere bearers and nourishers, or objects.<sup>3</sup> The origins of hierarchy, the power drive, the contempt for women as a caste and fear of nature were thus synergistically interrelated. A complex morality based on dominance and exploitation evolved along side the devaluing of nature and Feminine values.<sup>4</sup> Thus, just as the Christian Bible suggested Man was meant to subdue the earth, Confucius, in 500 B.C., said Man was meant to subdue woman: "It is the law of nature that woman should be held under the dominance of man".<sup>5</sup>

Another turning point in the institutionalization of gender-based hierarchy took place with the rise of industrial capitalism. First, the split between public and private spheres of life and morality became further entrenched.

The home was refashioned from a producer to a consumer unit in society, totally dependent upon a separate work structure no longer under its control. The work of the home and hence of women became concentrated on intensive interpersonal emotionality, extended child nurture, and the primary physical support (eating, sleeping) of male work.<sup>6</sup>

Second, with capitalism, the medieval view of nature as a living nurturing mother was replaced by the Seventeenth Century view of nature as inert and mechanistic.<sup>7</sup> Before this time, "the root metaphor binding together the self, society, and the cosmos was that of an organism".

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<sup>1</sup> Rosemary Radford Ruether, 1975, *New Woman: New Earth* (NY: Seabury Press) at p. 194-5.

<sup>2</sup> See Michael E. Zimmerman, 1987. "Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics", *Environmental Ethics* 9 pp. 21-44 at p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Marilyn French, 1985, *above* at p. 160.

<sup>4</sup> The evolution of power-based institutions and constructs have been traced in books such as Gerda Gerda Lerner, 1986, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); French, 1985, *above*; Murray Bookchin, 1982, *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy* (CA: Cheshire Books); Michael Tobias, 1985. *After Eden: History, Ecology and Conscience* (San Diego: Avant); Dinnerstein, 1976, *above*; Carolyn Merchant, 1990, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* Second Edition (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row).

<sup>5</sup> Confucius, c. 500 B.C. (Source: Tama Starr, 1991, *The Natural Inferiority of Women* (NY: Poseidon Press) at p. 118.

<sup>6</sup> Ruether, 1975, *above* at p. 197.

<sup>7</sup> Merchant, 1990, *above* at p. 1.



This new imagery was necessary to accommodate the industrial/commercial revolution, as an earth that was alive and sensitive could not ethically be raped and pillaged:

As long as the earth was considered to be alive and sensitive, it could be considered a breach of human ethical behaviour to carry out destructive acts against it.<sup>1</sup>

It was, however, not the needs, wants and purposes of society at large that changed, but only those with the vested interests and social power to bring about change. This conversion to a view of nature as dead matter was made possible by an Western ideology of male supremacy and a cosmology based on a subliminal sky/mind/male *versus* earth/matter/female duality.<sup>2</sup> Over time, this mechanistic view of nature became deeply etched in the professional and scientific institutions and methodologies of Western society. The rise of modern science and medicine, for example, reflected the related concepts of dualism (mind over matter) and power, as expressed in such goals as "the heroic conquest of nature".<sup>3</sup> As Andrew Dobson summarizes:

Bacon developed methods and goals for science that involved (and involve) the domination and control of nature; Descartes insisted that even the organic world (plants, animals, etc.) was merely an extension of the general mechanical nature of the universe; and Newton held that the workings of this machine-universe could be understood by reducing it to a collection of 'solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, moveable particles'.<sup>4</sup>

Human well being, as well as nature, came to be thought of as reducible to mechanism. As Marti Kheel notes, the body, when seen as 'inert matter', must conform to mechanical or chemical (atomistic) laws: "When disease strikes, it is the body's machinery that must be repaired".<sup>5</sup> Also, since the modern medical body is like a machine, it is thought to conform to Newtonian laws of cause and effect. Therefore, disease and ill health are usually attributed to a single, external 'cause' - the enemy organism - "fought with chemical weapons forced from nature on another battlefield - the modern research laboratory".<sup>6</sup>

The rise of male dominance in medicine and science was not entirely through metaphor and philosophy, however. The conquest of the remaining vestiges of power held by women in the

<sup>1</sup> Merchant, 1990, *above* at p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Most aboriginal cosmologies do not appear to make this separation.

<sup>3</sup> See Marti Kheel, 1989, "From Healing Herbs to Deadly Drugs: Western Medicine's War Against the Natural World", in Plant, ed., *above* pp. 96-111.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Dobson, 1990, *Green Political Thought* (London: Unwin Hyman) p. 38. (It is at this stage in history, the time of Bacon, Newton, and Descartes, that some greens trace the origins of the environmental problem. Others actually look to early Greeks for support for an environmental ethic.)

<sup>5</sup> Kheel, 1989, *above* at p. 98.

<sup>6</sup> Kheel, 1989, *above* at p. 99.

public sphere was sometimes quite literally a war of the sexes, though economic factors may have provided the immediate motive. In the male take-over of medicine, an estimated nine million people (mostly women) were burned as healers or 'witches' in the fifteenth through eighteenth centuries. Widows were easy prey for those who wanted to confiscate property or avoid responsibility for supporting them (often the church).<sup>1</sup> This activity was sometimes supported actively by church dogma:

According to the church, the vital, healing force of nature resided not within the earth, but rather, within a male, sky God. Disease, illness, and even labor pains, were all expressions of God's will. Only church-approved individuals (mostly men with university training and the priests with whom they were obliged to consult) could work within God's plan.<sup>2</sup>

The Patriarchal deity in Europe during this era was an authoritarian figure who relied on fear, guilt, and hate for social control. As described (somewhat facetiously) by Barbara Walker, He was:

...a God who condemned all humanity to eternal torture for the sin of seeking enlightenment, then changed his mind and decided to forgive some of the sinners, provided they ate the flesh and blood of his Son, who was also the Divine Father in human form, sent to earth for the express purpose of being sacrificed to himself, an allegedly loving Father who decreed his Son's painful slaying, then punished those who carried out his order. This bloodthirsty Son-killing or self-killing Father, who was one but also three; who professed to want good, but created evil; who pretended to love his mortal children while preparing for them a hell sadistic beyond belief; who ordained all things in advance, yet held humans entirely responsible for the errors he knew they would make; who talked of love and ruled by fear.<sup>3</sup>

Because of the androcentric orientation in the evolution of scientific and religious thought, and the fact that women were largely excluded from institutions of learning and the church, the values, attitudes and assumptions traditionally associated with men were taken to be representative of humanity as a whole. Patriarchal consciousness came to be accepted as coextensive with reality, while women became the generalized Other or the mere non-male.<sup>4</sup> "Patriarchy is given universal status because the universe itself becomes a male ego writ large

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<sup>1</sup> See generally, Barbara G. Walker, 1985, *The Crone: Woman of Age, Wisdom, and Power* (S.F.: Harper & Row)

<sup>2</sup> Kheel, 1989, *above* at p. 101.

<sup>3</sup> Barbara G. Walker, 1985, *above* at p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> For an early and comprehensive discussion, see Simone de Beauvoir, 1982, *The Second Sex*, trans. and ed. by H. M. Parshley (Harmondsworth: Penguin). Simone de Beauvoir was not an ecofeminist, however, and accepted the nature-culture dichotomy.

and, therefore, ...['his-story' is] the story of the power exploits of the male ego's search for domination and control."<sup>1</sup>

The above sketchy outline of the ecofeminist hypothesis for the evolution of Patriarchy and the Power Paradigm will have to suffice for personal purposes. We can begin with the modern era; the Age of Reason, or Enlightenment. The value system underlying the 'dominant paradigm' of modernity, and particularly the growth ethic, became cemented in the Enlightenment philosophy of the Eighteenth Century. The Enlightenment introduced concepts which still form the basic elements of both liberal and radical thought today. The earlier view of history as cyclical was supplanted by a belief in 'progress': the concept that society evolves in a forward progression. Progress was toward individual freedom and self-realization, which meant transcendence from social and natural constraints. The Enlightenment thinkers held that all 'men' possessed the faculty of reason. It was through this Masculinist notion of 'reason' - removed from emotion and intuition and disciplined by scientific method - that Man could ascertain the knowledge required for human progress.

The Enlightenment celebrated those ideals that were either associated with the Masculine self (autonomy, individualism, freedom, transcendence) or concepts construed in Masculine terms (instrumental rationality, the reductionist scientific method, and progress). The elevation of these values has been greatly implicated in environmental problems, and has resulted in the *imbalance* between the Masculine and Feminine in our selves and society that feminism seeks to redress.

### The androcentric premise revisited

The legacy of this history of male dominance, which I call the 'androcentric premise', is still found in virtually all modern schools of thought, even 'radical' ones as discussed in Chapter 11. The androcentric premise is an interpretation of human nature that assumes a particular Masculine model of Man and its associated values have universal application. There are important aspects of this premise, although introduced in Part I, are provided below for convenience.

(a) The *polarization* of Masculine and Feminine archetypes and the elevation of so-called Masculine traits and values. Attributes defined as Feminine, such as nurturing, caring, or accommodating, are seen as disadvantages for men, while those defined as Masculine (competitive, dominating, or calculating) are encouraged. To be Masculine, after all, is to dissociate oneself from Feminine attributes.

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Davis, 1986, "Ecosophy: The Seduction of Sophia?", *Environmental Ethics* 8 (2) pp. 151-162 at p. 157, quoting personal communication with Alan Drengson.

(b) The deep association of women, nature and earth. Because nature is identified with the Feminine, it exists to serve Man's physical needs (and the reverse). This association of nature and women in Patriarchal society has been used to underwrite *instrumentalism* whereby things are valued only to the extent that they are useful to Man.

(c) The idea that Man is *autonomous* or independent from both nature and community. This model of Man in Western thought has been described as a "mushroom"; he springs from nowhere as an adult male, with neither mother, nor sister, nor wife.<sup>1</sup> This false sense of Masculine autonomy underlies the *alienation* and *anthropocentrism* to which many environmentalists trace the modern crisis.

(d) The *universalization* of male experience and values. As we will see, the egoistic conception of human nature - the image of Man striving for self-realization through independence from necessity (nature) and freedom from social constraints (community) - becomes the implicit goal of humanity as a whole. Due to this egocentric projection, what men do not experience is regarded as somewhat unimportant, distant, or unreal.

(e) The linkage between Masculinity and *power over* others. Masculinity is measured by power as well as distance from the 'Feminine'. And because Masculinity is powerfulness and autonomy, dependency and powerlessness are perceived as marks of inferiority and grounds for unequal treatment. In the words of Bertrand de Jouvenel: "A man feels himself more of a man when he is imposing himself and making others the instruments of his will", which gives him "incomparable pleasure".<sup>2</sup>

### Political implications

What, then, are the implications of the androcentric premise? A basic effect is that Patriarchy prevents our questioning the necessity of power relationships *per se*. Militarism, colonialism, racism, classism, sexism, capitalism and other pathological 'isms' of modernity obtain legitimacy from the assumption that power relations and hierarchy are inevitably a part of human society due to Man's 'inherent nature'. If Mankind is by nature autonomous, aggressive, and competitive (that is, 'Masculine'), then psychological and physical coercion or hierarchical structures are necessary to manage conflict and maintain social order. Likewise, cooperative relationships, such as those found among women or some aspects of some tribal

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<sup>1</sup> Seyla Benhabib, 1987, "The Generalized and the Concrete Other: The Kohlberg-Gilligan Controversy and Feminist Theory", in Seyla Benhabib and Drucilla Cornell eds., *Feminism as Critique* (Cambridge: Polity Press) pp. 77-95 at p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Bertrand de Jouvenel, 1962, *On Power, its Nature and the History of its Growth*, trans. J.F. Huntington (N.Y.: Beacon Press). Source: Stephen Lukes, 1986, *Power* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell) at p. 122.

cultures, appear to be, by definition, unrealistic or utopian. Thus, as Salleh has pointed out, alternatives to the monolithic model of Man exist, but they have been backgrounded.<sup>1</sup>

In authoritarian approaches, this 'essentialist' conception of Man has been used to justify hierarchical authority, rules, and the apparatus to enforce them. In more liberal approaches, these same qualities are sometimes revered, even if distrusted. Liberal theory holds that Man's competitive, aggressive instincts should be allowed free rein to pursue His individual interests to the benefit of society. Thus, this social construction of Man serves to justify capitalism.

In short, the dominant political ideologies, both pluralist and centralist, share the same Masculine archetype as representing humanity, although it is used to justify different means of distributing power. Now, if power relations stem from pre-political or universal truths about human nature, the basis of power relations is removed from the realm of political and social debate. We cannot challenge the legitimating basis of the power structure because we think it cannot be otherwise. Since power relationships are preordained, militarism can be justified as unavoidable or necessary, regardless of its patent irrationality. Likewise, if humans will always compete for a greater share of resources, then the 'rational' attitude toward the environmental crisis would seem to be dog-eat-dog survivalism. This creates a chilling self-fulfilling prophecy in which nature and community cannot survive, and which contributes to the public apathy and fatalism so prevalent today.

Ecofeminists have challenged this Patriarchal essentialism, or the idea that so-called Masculine traits are the essence of human nature and that power structures are a necessary concomitant of human society. First, of course, it would seem from human beings' relative physical weakness that human evolution must have depended on cooperation in its early stages. Second, if, on the one hand, we accept (for arguments sake) the Patriarchal conception of women as passive, then the idea that humans are aggressive by nature holds only if women are non-human. That is, if women are considered 'fully human' - then it cannot be argued that humans are innately aggressive. On the other hand, if we accept (again for argument's sake) that the power drive is intrinsic to humans, then the majority of humans, women, have largely been socialized to suppress it, so surely men can be too.

### **Androcentrism and modern pathologies**

If we want to get to the bottom of a psychological problem we must uncover our 'blind spot', or what we are denying. The same is true on a social level. Today, our crucial blind spot - what we are trained not to see - is the pathological imbalance created by the male-centred

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<sup>1</sup> Ariel Salleh, 1984, "Deeper than Deep Ecology: The Eco-Feminist Connection", *Environmental Ethics* 6 (Winter) pp. 335-341.

social structures and values of Patriarchy. In the rest of Part III, we explore how the failure to use androcentrism and gender as analytical categories has affected both green theory and strategy. Analyses that systematically ignore a universal basis of oppression cannot be sufficient:

Unless we understand the interrelationships of human systems of oppression, and the oppression of the earth, we cannot develop a strategy and program of political action that makes sense. It is in the interests of those who rule to prevent us from seeing these connections - because such knowledge is power.<sup>1</sup>

I have suggested that the Patriarchal construction of reality is implicated in the behaviours and attitudes that environmentalists cite as underlying causes of the modern crisis: competitive individualism, capitalism, human chauvinism, classism, racism, colonialism, instrumentalism, hierarchy, parochialism, and the addiction to power. Androcentrism interacts with all systems of oppression to which environmental theorists attribute the modern crisis. The threads in the complex tapestry of our Patriarchal culture are, of course, inextricably interwoven, and not in a simple cause and effect relationship. The purpose of the following examples is therefore only to indicate the pervasiveness of androcentrism in problems of modernity.

### **Alienation**

Our alienation or estrangement from nature, from each other and from ourselves has been an important theme in various diagnoses of the modern crisis. People cannot care about the community and environment if their lives lack a sense of meaning and belonging. Alienation is underwritten by hierarchical dualism on several levels: self from self, self from Other, and self from nature. First, is the split in the person or self. Humans are conceptually divided into body and spirit. One effect of this division of the self is to 'project' problems onto the 'outer' world, and to seek solutions outside the self (an approach which many find characteristic of male problem-solving processes).

Dualistic thought has posited an infinite gap between the sacred (divine perfection) and the profane (human imperfection). This has forced us to reach outside ourselves for the source of meaning in our lives, whether by turning to sacred texts or to religious leaders (prophets, holy men, gurus), or by adhering to religious laws and doctrines. (Of course, in our own secularized age, scientific authority has largely superseded the role of religion in earlier years.)<sup>2</sup>

Second, the dualistic construction of Patriarchy alienates Man from Other. In Patriarchy, one's identity depends on their autonomy and individualism. This egocentric model of Man is

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<sup>1</sup> Starhawk, 1989, "Feminist, Earth-based Spirituality and Ecofeminism", in Judith Plant, ed., *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism* (Ontario: Between the Lines) pp. 174-185 at p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> Marlene A. Schiwy and Steven M. Rosen, 1990, "Spinning the Web of Life: Feminism, Ecology, and Christ Wolf", in *The Trumpeter* 7 (1) (Winter) pp. 16-26 at p.17.

based on (men's) denial of their dependency on relationships, and distancing from the feminine. As Ynestra King explains: "the making of women and nature into 'others' to be appropriated and dominated, is based on a profound forgetting by men. They forget that they are born of women...".<sup>1</sup>

Third, this false sense of autonomy contributes to Man's alienation from nature. Benhabib's mushroom (above) does not need nature, except as a resource. This desire to be free or independent of nature is reflected in our environmental design fields. Building design reflects the desire to separate and elevate Man from nature (for example, to replace vegetation with concrete, and streams with pipes).

### Instrumentalism

Instrumentalism, the idea that nature (and Other) exists for Man's use, is a useful explanation of the environmental crisis. The Bible, it has often been argued, encourages the view that the earth exists to be exploited.<sup>2</sup> It is less often acknowledged however, that instrumentalism and the major religions that supported it were embedded in an androcentric world-view. As Man represented humanity, and Woman was a subset of Man, it is easy to see how she could come to be regarded as a 'prop' to serve Man. (That is, She became 'objectified'.) Similarly, as Man was seen as separate from nature, nature came to be regarded as a stage against which competing egos played out their roles. Nature became a mere backdrop, not subject to moral or ethical consideration, and therefore free for the taking.

Deep ecologists argue that human-centredness leads to instrumentalism. However, instrumentalism and anthropocentrism may be seen as stemming from, or at least evolving along with, androcentrism: the egocentric universalization and elevation of male experience. That is, while it may be a moot point, androcentrism logically, and perhaps historically, preceded the objectification of nature. There is, after all, no evidence that the conception of nature as being only for human purposes existed prior to the development of androcentrism, or that anthropocentrism existed prior to androcentrism, for that matter. (It could also be argued that the domestication and abuse of animals could have been the model by which humans were later subjugated. I would conjecture that if there were an original form of domination - in itself a questionable proposition - it would probably stem from a more fundamental need, such as sex and reproduction.)

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<sup>1</sup> Ynestra King, 1983, "Toward an Ecological Feminism and A Feminist Ecology", in Joan Rothschild, ed., *Machina Ex Dea: Feminist Perspectives on Technology* (NY: Pergamon) at p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> See Lynn White, 1967, "The Historical Roots of Our Environmental Crisis", in *Science* 155 (March) 1203-7. But see Passmore, John, 1974, *Man's Responsibility Toward Nature: Ecological Problems and Western Tradition* (NY: Scribners). Passmore argues that the Western attitude is not inherently destructive.

## Hierarchy and bureaucracy

Social ecologists have pointed out that hierarchical social structures, which institutionalize dominance relationships, are another fundamental root of the modern crisis. Hierarchies reflect two forms of dominance, structural and psychological. As Adair and Howell point out: "patterns of domination and submission reside not just in our institutions and political processes, but within each of us".<sup>1</sup> Systems of hierarchy and privilege reproduce or perpetuate themselves by "the creation of a mindset in which we are taught to mistrust our experience, to hand over our power to 'experts', technicians, and authorities".<sup>2</sup> Bureaucratic hierarchies are self-reinforcing because they reward obedience and dominant/submissive behaviour. "The more people internalize a Patriarchal view of the self and nature, the less overt force is needed to keep them in their place".<sup>3</sup>

The modern bureaucracy demonstrates the goal-displacing tendencies that hierarchies promote: 'empire building' often takes precedence over service delivery. Likewise, hierarchies create misplaced loyalties: 'public servants' in environmental agencies often view the public as the adversary and adopt the goals of the industry they are charged with regulating as their own. This is partly why environmental bureaucracies are so readily 'captured' by industry. Thus, hierarchies, even when set up with good intentions, are prone to becoming the adversary of the environment.

While not minimizing the importance of bureaucracy in influencing behaviour, there is, however, a common tendency to adopt a position of 'institutional determinism' (below). This mechanistic view of institutions overlooks *personal motivations* that operate within and support hierarchical institutions. Certainly, not all people behave the same in a bureaucracy. It is therefore important to look at the motivation for obtaining power and status within the social hierarchy in the first place, such as the pressures of Masculine identity. To subsume power relations based on sex and gender as a mere example of hierarchy is to take an overly mechanistic view of bureaucratic functionaries.

## Industrialism

Industrialism, with its attendant pollution and alienating modes of work, is another important cause of ecological problems. A factor enabling or fostering the rise of industrialism was the fixation with mechanism (above), which reflects an obsession with power and control. In industrialization, we see the replacement of natural processes with machines which harness natural power to secure Man's social power.

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<sup>1</sup> Adair and Howell, 1989, in Plant, ed., *above* at p. 220.

<sup>2</sup> Adair and Howell, 1989, in Plant, ed., *above* at p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> Adair and Howell, 1989, in Plant, ed., *above* at p. 220.



What is played out on the psychological level as domination of the animus [doing; extroverted] over the anima [being; introverted] and on the social level as the domination of men over women, becomes on the political and economic level the domination of science/technology and capitalistic product-orientation over nature/nurture and humanistic process-orientation.<sup>1</sup>

In industrial development, as in the other roots of the environmental crisis, we see the self-reinforcing nature of the ideology of power. Industrialism itself, which expropriates power and resources from nature, the working class, the colonies, and women, is used as evidence of Man's superiority and right to dominate and control. Also, the productivity engendered by industrial projects works to reinforce the illusion of white middle-class male superiority. Yet, in fact, the increased productivity from industrialization comes from 'slave' labour in the form of energy converted from the use of natural resources.<sup>2</sup> As Vandana Shiva points out, while the industrialized countries are seen as more efficient and productive, this owes much to the fact that, for example, the average person in the United States has 250 times more 'slaves' than the average Nigerian. "If Americans were short of 249 of the 250 'slaves', one wonders how efficient they would prove themselves to be?"<sup>3</sup> The same, of course, holds true for men whose productivity is related to being relieved of domestic duties by women.

Industrialism has also increased the division of labour based on sex, the isolation of women from culture, politics and science, and the separation between the private and public life worlds. Women became "the degraded bystanders of a male-oriented civilization that reared itself up beside woman's own culture, corroded it, and established systematic ways of manipulating it".<sup>4</sup>

### A-morality

Androcentrism is a factor in the marginalization or removal of morality from the public sphere - another major root of the modern crisis. The separation of society into public/male and private/female spheres not only reinforced the institutional marginalization of women, it also divided Masculine and Feminine conceptions of morality. Emotions, feelings, and ethical considerations became confined to the private sphere of the family. In Rosemary Ruether's words:

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Koen, 1980, "Patriarchy and the Nuclear Mentality" in Susan Koen, Nina Swaim and Friends. *Ain't No Where We Can Run: Handbook for Women on the Nuclear Mentality* (VT: Wand) at p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Vandana Shiva, 1990, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development* (London: Zed Books) at p. 8, citing Amory Lovins. According to UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme), people in high-income countries consume 15 times more energy than people in low-income countries. UNEP, 1992, *Our Planet* 4 2).

<sup>3</sup> Shiva, 1989, in Plant, ed., *above* at p. 86.

<sup>4</sup> Murray Bookchin, 1989, *Remaking Society* (Montreal: Black Rose Books) at p. 65.

...the male sphere of public life becomes rational in a way that is emptied of human values. Morality is privatized, sentimentalized, and identified with the "feminine" in a way that both conceals the essential immorality of sexism and rationalizes a value-free public world. A morality defined as "feminine" has no place in the "real world" of competitive male egoism and technological rationality.<sup>1</sup>

Because of the conception of Man as competitive and autonomous, morality in the public sphere is that of a balancing of interests, or 'justice', to be determined by an impartial, 'higher' authority. As discussed in Part II, these rights-based social justice concepts cannot comprehend an environmental Ethic, because environmental preservation cannot be encompassed by a system based on distributional fairness or 'rights' alone.

Another example of the environmental consequences of this public/private split is to be found in the assumption that the economy can be studied independently from the family and 'women's work'.<sup>2</sup> Activities that are basic to human survival (such as child care, housework, nursing and other forms of social support) are excluded from economic research and policy making. This has contributed to the destruction of Third World environments in the name of progress.<sup>3</sup>

### Capitalism

Finally, as suggested earlier, androcentrism also underlies and legitimizes capitalism. Again, capitalism is supported by a Masculine conception of 'human nature': inherently competitive, aggressive, independent and self-interested. Moreover, capitalism has been given a *moral* tone by the ideological myths of political and market liberalism with which it has been associated. Liberalism is grounded in Benhabib's autonomous, independent 'mushroom', or in Corinne D'Souza's words, "an image of an individual who owed nothing to society".<sup>4</sup> Thus, as argued above, the androcentric thought world makes modern socio-economic structures and concepts of ethics - even capitalism - seem universal, inevitable and preordained.

Many describe capitalism, instead, as an outcome of the profit motive or greed. However, this is an inadequate explanation unless we understand profit or wealth as a source and symbol of dominance. This latter interpretation is more accurate, because, once people have a certain

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<sup>1</sup> Ruether, 1975, *New Woman: New Earth* (NY: Seabury Press) *above* at p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> Linda Nicholson, 1987, "Feminism and Marx. Integrating Kinship with the Economic", in Benhabib and Cornell, eds., *above* pp. 16-30.

<sup>3</sup> See generally Marilyn Waring, 1988, *Counting for Nothing: What Men Value and What Women are Worth* (London: Allen & Unwin). See also section below on 'Third World Development'.

<sup>4</sup> Corinne Kumar D'Souza, 1989, "A New Movement, a New Hope: East Wind, West Wind, and the Wind from the South", in Plant, ed., 1989, *above* pp. 29-39.

standard of living, profit only serves to put people above others in the social hierarchy, to influence people, or to otherwise exercise power. That greed and profit do not suffice to explain the power drive is evidenced by the behaviour of corporate decision makers who cynically counter the fear of environmental destruction with fear of economic crises that would allegedly result from environmental protection, despite the fact that it can be demonstrated that conservation is profitable for big business.<sup>1</sup> Corporations know this, but often spend millions on fighting environmental referendums, legislation, and law suits rather than on improving their efficiency, public image, or even profits.<sup>2</sup> This attitude is changing, although slowly at best.<sup>3</sup>

Wealth accumulation, then, is about power, and money and possessions should be theorized as means to acquire and demonstrate power, not the reverse. This leads to a discussion of technology and technocracy generally, which provides a more immediate context for the problems of Planning reform.

### Technological determinism

Many green theorists have singled out technological growth with its attendant consumerism and waste as a major cause of the environmental crisis. Often, however, the problem has been treated in value-neutral terms, such as 'technological determinism'. Many writers who have analyzed the ramifications of technology upon society and human consciousness have simply tended to see technology as taking on a life of its own, divorced from its social roots in power struggles.<sup>4</sup> Technology has indeed had a large influence on human values and perceptions of nature and society. However, some writers have shown that technological change also mirrors *prior* changes in social organization.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The case is made in Amory B. Lovins, et al., 1986, *Energy Unbound: A Fable for America's Future* (CA: Sierra Books).

<sup>2</sup> For example, in 1990, vested interests in California spent \$17 million to defeat the so-called 'Big Green' initiative, or pro-environment referendum.

<sup>3</sup> Perhaps the most well know example of corporate 'greening' is the 3M corporation which has demonstrated the financial advantage of environmental conservation. Also, environmental audits are becoming a new enterprise.

<sup>4</sup> See Jacques Ellul, 1964, *The Technological Society*, trans. by John Wilkinson (NY: Vintage Books); Hans Jonas, 1982, *The Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age* (IL: University of Chicago Press); George Grant, 1986, *Technology and Justice* (IN: University of Notre Dame Press); Langdon Winner, 1977, *Autonomous Technology* (MA: MIT Press) and Langdon Winner, 1986, *The Whale and the Reactor: A Search for Limits in an Age of High Technology* (IL: University of Chicago Press). For an early articulation of this position, see Georg Friedrich Juenger, 1949, *The Failure of Technology* (IL: Regnery Gateway).

<sup>5</sup> Lewis Mumford, 1966, *The Myth of the Machine: Technics and Human Development* (NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich).

Still others have added a critical dimension to the analysis of technological change, by showing how innovations have been partly determined by existing patterns of technology and power relations generally.<sup>1</sup> For example, automation has sometimes been introduced as a means of breaking unions and replacing specialists with cheaper unskilled labour (usually women and children). Technological innovations have also been influenced by class relations, not just between capitalists and labour but between factions of the working class as well. As Judy Wajcman shows, the character of technological change has involved an element of choice, and these choices have often been political. For example, decisions concerning the *form* of automation have sometimes been more to increase managerial control over production than to increase the degree of efficiency.<sup>2</sup> Thus technology reflects the relative power of managers over workers.

However, many analyses of technological change as a function of social relations and power struggles have ignored the effect of gender relations within industry.<sup>3</sup> Men have used their monopoly on skilled trades, that resulted from the gender division already entrenched by industrialization, to retain a monopoly on the new skills that accompanied technological innovations. Furthermore, the existing gendered division of labour within the factory meant that machinery was designed by men with men in mind, whether the designers were capitalist inventors or skilled craftsmen. Thus, industrial technology from its origins has reflected male power as well as capitalist domination.<sup>4</sup>

More evidence that gender divisions affect the nature of technological development is that technological change has been slower in industries where there is an abundant supply of cheap labour, and which use skills associated with women, such as sewing. Because women's work is underpaid in relation to the skills involved, reducing labour cost and power has not been an imperative in these areas.<sup>5</sup> Those industries where women's (cheap) labour prevails are also those industries that have least direct involvement in the control and exploitation of nature. Investment in technological change is therefore increasingly directed toward reducing the cost of expensive male work in, for example, road works, mining, forestry, and dam building, and is thus often in the service of faster, more efficient exploitation and consumerism. Investment

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<sup>1</sup> David Noble, 1984, *Forces of Production: A Social History of Industrial Automation* (NY: Knopf); Murray Bookchin, 1980, *Toward an Ecological Society* (Montreal: Black Rose Books)

<sup>2</sup> See generally Noble, 1984, *above*.

<sup>3</sup> Judy Wajcman, 1991, *Feminism Confronts Technology* (Sydney: Allan & Unwin) at p. 15. She cites Mumford and Marcuse as examples of this approach.

<sup>4</sup> Wajcman, 1991, *above* at p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Wajcman, 1991, *above* at pp. 48-49. Unfortunately, Wajcman mis-states the position of ecofeminism as maintaining that women's values have a biological basis (p.7) which may explain why she does not cite recent ecofeminist work in her bibliography.

tends not to be in technologies that promote life quality or that entail meaningful work. Thus the dynamics and priorities of technological development reflect the fact that the technocratic professions are male-dominated.

The faith in techno-scientific methodologies, still unquestioned in some circles, is facilitated by the exclusion of women from the professions through sexism and/or 'self-discrimination' on the part of women. While sexism is sometimes indirect and difficult to identify, self-discrimination is virtually invisible. The fear of success, which impedes many women's careers, is related to the polarization of male-female attributes. Women have been programmed to believe that they do not deserve success or that to strive for power and success is Masculine. To be professional and feminine, then women must choose to adopt behaviour that is disempowering on another level.<sup>1</sup> Conversely, those women who do enter the male-dominant professions must, to a large extent, adopt Patriarchal values and modes of behaviour in order to succeed. This has the effect of making a particular set of values seem universal and inevitable.

Finally, as Marcuse has argued, technology itself is linked with the domination of nature, not only in application, but in its very construction.<sup>2</sup> In technological fields, knowledge has come to be almost synonymous with power, rather than wisdom.<sup>3</sup> To the extent that scientists and technocrats work in an anti-feminine and anti-natural environment with Masculinist concepts and decision rules, they simply cannot be objective.

In short, industrial technology is not value-neutral. It evolved in Patriarchal societies with ideologies which portrayed the domination and control of nature and society as a mandate rather than as part of the problem. Thus, to treat technology as an objective, gender-neutral concept is to ignore important biases of power and value. As argued in Part II, Patriarchal processes and values expressed within technocratic planning and decision-making methods themselves lead to policies and practices that will inevitably destroy the environment. They are inherently biased in favour of the existing distribution of power, and against the preservation of such meaningful, essential aspects of life as community and wilderness.

## Technocracy

Let us now look at a couple of examples of how the Masculine values expressed in technocratic environments affect actual outcomes. First, as said above, to be dependent is to

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Koen, 1980, "Patriarchy and the Nuclear Mentality" in Susan Koen, Nina Swaim, and Friends, *above*, (citing Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* p. 30, and Matina Horner in *Essays in Feminism* by Vivian Gornick p. 84). See also Judy Wajcman, 1991, *above* at p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Marcuse, 1964, *One-Dimensional Man* (MA: Beacon Press).

<sup>3</sup> See Nicolas Maxwell, 1987, *From Knowledge to Wisdom: a Revolution in the Aims and Methods of Science* (N.Y.: Basil Blackwell).

be unmanly, so Man tends to deny the importance of emotional needs. Only physical, objective needs really count. Thus, in technocratic organizations there is a tendency to define human *needs* in very limited Masculine terms that assume individual autonomy. Tangible economic goods and human productivity alleviate physical, impersonal needs, and are therefore suitable subjects for public policy. However, psychological or emotional needs which involve personal relationships, such as congenial work environments, recognition, and so forth have been given a low priority. When they are addressed by mainstream theory, it has been basically for manipulative or instrumental purposes, such as increasing worker productivity.<sup>1</sup>

This also partly explains why only the physical are addressed: food, medicine, clothing and shelter. Thus in the name of meeting human needs, even well-intended 'development' projects have deprived people in the Third world of community, self-reliance, and natural, sustainable life styles. Villagers are displaced into the consumer economy where supposedly their physical needs will be met. Displacing indigenous peoples or subsistence farmers into the consumer economy has meant the disintegration of their social and economic, as well as their life support, systems. Their physical needs are only met in theory, because, by destroying their community and environment, the villagers end up physically and economically destitute as well.

Second, risk-taking and adventurism are Masculine, while caution is cowardice and Feminine (risk-taking is arguably an effort to control the uncontrollable). These Masculine values are reflected in our irresponsible scientific and research priorities. The literature of Planning and policy analysis often elevates risk-taking to an art form. It is said that Man seeks immortality through deeds of glory. Consequently:

research resources go to the most prestigious projects, and these are frequently the most daring and difficult (like transplant surgery or space technology) and not the most useful to most people.<sup>2</sup>

These priorities help to explain why reckless 'escapades' (such as military adventurism, genetic engineering and nuclear power) are not subject to any meaningful burden of proof or legitimate cost-benefit analyses. Thus, for example, despite the fact that 80 percent or more of all cancers are attributable to environmental factors, some 500 to 1000 new chemicals are added each year to the over 70 thousand presently in daily use.<sup>3</sup> The United States produces 500

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<sup>1</sup> Taylorism is an example of this.

<sup>2</sup> Penny Strange, 1989, "It'll Make a Man of You: A Feminist View of the Arms Race", in Diana E. H. Russell, ed., *Exposing Nuclear Phallacies* (NY: Pergamon Press) pp. 140-126 at p. 122.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Ekins, Mayer Hillman and Robert Hutchinson, 1992, *Wealth Beyond Measure: An Atlas of New Economics* (London: Gaia Books) at p. 17.

million tons of hazardous waste a year,<sup>1</sup> and it is estimated that pesticide residues in domestically grown foods may result in 20,000 new cases of cancer a year.<sup>2</sup> This is risk taking on a mind-boggling scale. On the other hand, conservationists must establish 'how dead' is an ecosystem, how near to extinction is a species, or how near to total biological collapse is a stream before they can argue for restricting Man's right to 'self-expression' through industrialism, technology, and science.<sup>3</sup>

So far in this Chapter it has been suggested that modern pathologies, that have been separated out in Manstream thought to explain the origins of the environmental crisis, are not gender-neutral and that to ignore this is to miss important connections between systems of human oppression and environmental destruction. Ecofeminism also makes other links between systems of oppression and androcentrism (for example in the case of animal 'rights'),<sup>4</sup> However, it is not my intention to reduce all problems of modernity to Patriarchy, but to suggest that ecofeminism is a useful prism through which to understand the logic of exploitation - which otherwise defies rational analysis. Masculinity is a common thread, and for practical purposes could perhaps be a key piece in the 'Chinese puzzle' which holds the system together - if only because most choose to discuss world problems as if the Feminine gender were non-existent or unimportant. In Warren's words, Patriarchy is a trap from which both men and women must break free. Ecofeminism "encourages us to think ourselves out of these traps, by *reconceptualizing* ourselves and our relation to the non-human natural world in non-patriarchal ways."<sup>5</sup>

## Gender-blindness and environmental problems

I have suggested that the cultural pathologies of modernity have, in part, been shaped by the polarization of Masculine and Feminine archetypes, the universalization of Masculine experience, and the elevation of Masculine values (or hierarchical dualism, for short). Having

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<sup>1</sup> Unreleased draft report of *National Survey of Hazardous Waste Treatment Storage, Disposal and Recycling Facilities: Final Report*, submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency by Research Triangle Institute (Durham, NC). Source: Centre for Investigative Reporting and Bill Moyers, 1990, *Global Dumping Ground: The International Traffic in Hazardous Wastes* (WA: Seven Locks Press) at p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Sandra Postel, 1987, *Defusing the Toxics Threat: Controlling Pesticides and Industrial Waste* (Washington D.C.: Worldwatch Institute).

<sup>3</sup> Fully 25 percent of species are at risk of extinction within the next 30 years, according to the United Nations Environment Programme. Source: UNEP, 1992, *Our Planet* 4 (2) at p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> See for example, Susan Yeich, 1991, "Ecological Feminism: Drawing Connections between the Oppression of Women, Animals and Nature", *The Trumpeter: Journal of Ecosophy* 8 (2) pp. 84-87.

<sup>5</sup> Karen J. Warren, 1990, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism", *Environmental Ethics* 12 (2) pp. 125-146.

discussed androcentrism in relation to the theoretical analysis of environmental problems, we now look at some practical problems for activists of a gender-neutral analysis. I argue that a gender-blind prism hides problems centring on power, dominance, and Masculinity, and consequently backgrounds certain realities that impact upon the environment. Consequently, the political strategies of environmentalists are often flawed.

The use of a gender-blind prism hides problems centring on power, dominance, and Masculinity, and therefore backgrounds certain realities that affect the environment. By not addressing the gendered nature of the following basic environmental issues, Manstream theory also fuels the criticism that the environmental movement is elitist or out of touch with every day problems. Perhaps one reason that Manstream thought does not concern itself with gender is that issues *nominally* concerning 'only' women do not seem 'universal' (such as the feminization of poverty, pornography and wife abuse). At first, they appear to only concern a subset of humanity. This marginalization process is fundamental to the preservation of Patriarchy. Let us take some examples of how gender-blindness (or more specifically, an analysis centred on anthropocentrism) limits our understanding of pivotal environmental issues: Third World planning and development, decision making, population growth, international politics, and militarism.

### Third World Development

The interconnection between feminist issues, institutional systems, and environmental desecration is illustrated by the impact of the androcentric international accounting system. The United Nations System of National Accounts selects *which* transactions count as 'production' for purposes of calculating Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Feminists have shown the impact on the environment of the fact that 'women's work' is not counted in international economic balance sheets.<sup>1</sup> For example, when women are engaged in agriculture for home consumption, their work is not counted. The accounting system is thus biased in favour of large-scale capital-intensive projects and the replacement of indigenous forests with cash crops, which in turn destroys the local ecology and the self-sufficiency of the population. Marilyn Waring establishes that there is no logical or practical reason sufficient to explain the exclusion of 'women's work' from what is measured and therefore counted as contributing to GDP. Man's work that is equally difficult to measure is assessed. Only male chauvinism can fully account for it.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For example, see Marilyn Waring, 1988, *above* ; Susan George, 1988, *A Fate Worse than Debt* (NY: Grove); Hazel Henderson, 1978, *Creating Alternative Futures* (N.Y: Berkley); Lisa Leghorn and Katherine Parker, 1981, *Women's Worth. Sexual Economics and the World of Women* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul).

<sup>2</sup> See generally Waring, 1988, *above*.



Aid and development programs in the Third World have been disastrous for similar reasons, including the failure to consult women when planning for development or conservation.<sup>1</sup> The problems created by not looking at the situation of women are exemplified by the failure of a project in Malawi recounted by Waring. In brief, agricultural demonstrations were set up to teach men to grow soya beans, while home economics classes were given to teach women to cook them. In the end, the women could not use the recipes because only women did the farming for home consumption and they did not know how to grow soya beans.<sup>2</sup> The men knew how, but they only worked on plantations.

Waring, George and others have shown how, as a practical matter, institutional and decision-making Infrastructures cannot be reformed without looking squarely at the underlying issues of power and androcentrism. Moreover, inequitable systems are obscured behind an ostensibly technical facade. For example, the loans to Third World countries benefit the lenders, while appearing to be 'aid'. According to a leading agency, Community Aid Abroad, the total flow of resources from rich countries to poor from 1982-1986 (including overseas aid) was \$468 billion. During this same five years, the poor paid 688 billion in debt repayments. The lender countries gained 200 billion from the process of helping the poor get poorer.<sup>3</sup> Not only that, aid usually has strings attached. In short, "debt is acting like a pump, extracting wealth form the South and transferring it to the Northern Banks."<sup>4</sup>

## Population

Because they are gender-blind, non-feminist environmental theories offer no new insights or answers for the problem of the burgeoning human population. They put forth the same answers as the mainstream, like 'self-discipline', more economic equality, control of women's reproductive cycle, or naive and paternalistic policy statements like 'we must educate women to have fewer children'. Some 'spokesmen', after much prodding, have begun to acknowledge the need to empower women in the Third World but still place the responsibility for the population dilemma, in effect, upon women.<sup>5</sup> While it will certainly be necessary to redistribute resources and provide for birth prevention, these measures will be insufficient until women have real choices about procreation.

Many leading greens still ignore the crucial fact that in most countries women are treated literally as chattels to be bought and sold. While it is not necessary to recite the atrocities

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<sup>1</sup> See George, 1988, *above*.

<sup>2</sup> Waring, 1988, *above* at p. 190.

<sup>3</sup> CAA Australia information sheet, 1992. See generally George, 1988, *above*.

<sup>4</sup> Frank Barnaby, ed., 1988, *The Gaia Peace Atlas* (NY: Doubleday) at p. 114.

<sup>5</sup> For example, Paul Ehrlich, among others, now suggests the need to educate women in order to solve the population problem. (Richard Jones Memorial Lecture, Hobart, 1990.)

against women in, say, India, Pakistan, Romania, and Iran, it must be recognized that women in most 'developed' countries are also regarded as property to varying extents. Even in Australia, for example, one in four people condone violence by husbands against wives, and approximately half the murders of wives occur when they try to leave their 'owners'.<sup>1</sup> This is not 'self-determination'. It is no coincidence that the Catholic Church, a misogynist edifice, is a proponent of forced child bearing.

If women had physical security (food, shelter, health care), and control over their own bodies, and were not subject to male-supremacist cultures, then population and child mortality would both decrease. Few would have large families - if only because pregnancy and childcare are simply too much work. Similarly, the liberation of men, an important part of the feminist agenda, would also help to solve the population problem. Patriarchal societies that equate personal worth with success, and success with Masculinity, place pressure on men to produce many offspring.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, governments use women to provide children for military strength and markets for growth-based development. As Starhawk notes, overpopulation is directly connected to war:

Governments restrict women's control over reproduction and enforce childbearing to ensure national strength on the battlefield. Any movement truly concerned with overpopulation would therefore necessarily become an antimilitarist movement as well.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, women and colonies are objectified as natural resources. (When in Malaysia in 1985, for example, I heard the prime minister go on television to urge women to produce more children!) Anthropocentrism may help to explain why the population problem has not been addressed, but it cannot account for the promotion of greater population to benefit only business and warfare. Nor does anthropocentrism explain the current form of population control - mass genocide of the poor. 40,000 people, mostly children, die needlessly each day from preventable illness and, despite enough food in the world, starvation.

In a sexist culture, the idea that women can reclaim their own bodies creates emotional reactions. Although slavery is considered immoral, feminists still have the 'burden of proof' to show that men do not have the moral right to control women's bodies. In the real world, to the extent that women do not own their own bodies, men do. Although deep ecologists would

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<sup>1</sup> National poll, 1989, reported by Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Australia, May 25.

<sup>2</sup> Herb Goldberg, 1987, *The Inner Male: Overcoming Roadblocks to Intimacy* (Ontario: New American Library).

<sup>3</sup> Starhawk, 1989, *above* at p. 181.

probably support the idea of women's autonomy, the paradigm does not provide a basis for this view.<sup>1</sup>

### Decision making

The realities of power and influence in decisions impacting upon the environment are not explained by the concept of anthropocentrism, nor remedied by a grander perception of self. For example, in many years as a student and practitioner of environmental design and planning, I never knew public administrators to grant permits that would contribute to the destruction of ecosystems and species *because* they cared about humans over animals. After all, if decision makers were concerned about humans they would not destroy their life support system and food chain. It cannot be argued that they are simply unaware of ecology when it is pointed out to them in environmental impact analyses.

In actual practice (as the case study illustrates, Appendix 1), decision makers are usually more concerned with seeking social reinforcement, or with how the decision will affect their personal standing in a social structure. Rather than, say, balancing *public* costs and benefits, they arguably balance the costs to themselves of possible conflict or public protest against the benefits of being 'on side with' special interests. For example, in the Franklin Dam case (as recounted in Appendix 1) appearing 'decisive' (read Masculine) was "more important than making the right decision".

Another example is that what is 'environmentally sound' is determined by experts - technocrats, decision analysts and planners. Experts, by definition, are concerned about their position: they would not be 'experts' without status in a social hierarchy. For example (as argued in Part II) because of their high stakes in credibility, environmental planners use methods derived from economists' models even when such models are inappropriate. 'Economic creep', or the growing infiltration of neo-classical economic concepts into other fields, does not result from placing the interests of humans over nature. If anything, it reflects the largely unconscious desire of professionals to be relevant to the interests of the powerful and to be accepted by the male-dominant intelligentsia.

Much political science still treats decision makers as if they were boxes in an office chart. But people are *not* devoid of personal insecurities, egos, or pressures to conform to the blueprint for Masculinity. In a system based on dominance relationships, we can expect people to feel insecure. However, the narrow, positivist view of decision makers as faceless, emotionless 'information processors' has meant that the psychological, political and cultural influences, particularly those related to gender and power, have been screened from view.

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, Miss Ann Thropy, 1991,, "Overpopulation and Industrialism", in John Davis and Dave Foreman, eds., *The Earth First Reader: Ten Years of Radical Environmentalism* (UT: Gibbs Smith).

Therefore, personal insecurity as a factor in decision-making is not considered a problem in need of attention. Anthropocentrism ignores the personal dynamics of decision-making (in favour of a rationalist view) and therefore, in effect, does not challenge this mainstream view.

### International politics

Anthropocentrism does little to enlighten us about international capitalist intrigue. Cynthia Enloe, for one, shows how power in international politics has depended on sustaining notions about gender, and quite deliberately at that. She gives examples which demonstrate that the manipulation of concepts of Femininity and Masculinity is a deliberate tool used in colonization policies, trading strategies, corporate marketing and military doctrines for political purposes.<sup>1</sup>

While women have not been mere pawns in global politics, governments and companies with government backing have made explicit attempts to try to control and channel women's actions in order to achieve their own ends. Male officials who make foreign policy might prefer to think of themselves as dealing with high finance or military strategy, but in reality they have self-consciously designed immigration, labor, civil service, propaganda and military bases policies so as to control women.<sup>2</sup>

The basic reason for the control of women by official policy, I would allege, has been to control men.

Gender needs to be made visible in order to understand how and why international power takes the forms it does. There are, for instance, important links between the feminization of poverty and the impoverishment of nature in the Third World. When women are made invisible, or portrayed as an interest group, the interconnections between development, capital accumulation and colonialism are concealed. As Vandana Shiva says:

Insufficient and inadequate 'participation' in 'development' was not the cause of women's increasing underdevelopment. It was, rather, their enforced but asymmetrical participation in it, by which they bore the costs but were excluded from the benefits, that was responsible.<sup>3</sup>

When women are seen as an interest group, the problem becomes to increase their participation in development, but when we look at gender, or the social significance of sex roles, we see that women's dispossession has "aggravated and deepened the colonial processes of ecological degradation and the loss of political control over nature's sustenance base".<sup>4</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Cynthia Enloe, 1989, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

<sup>2</sup> Cynthia Enloe, *above* at p. 199.

<sup>3</sup> Vandana Shiva, 1989. "Development, Ecology, and Women", in Plant, ed., 1989, *above* at p. 86.

<sup>4</sup> Shiva, 1989, *above* at p. 81.

use of gender divisions, as with other social divisions, is fertile ground for manipulation in the interests of the powerful.

Culture-wide blind spots such as the political significance of gender and the invisibility of the values and experience of women (and some aspects of some tribal cultures) serve the interests of the powerful in other ways as well. For example, by objectifying women and colonies as natural resources, their exploitation is depoliticized and separated from purely humanitarian concerns about poverty and hunger. By obscuring the connection between gender and poverty, the analysis of reformists thus remain less effective. And, again, androcentric analysis excludes viable common-sense choices from consideration, by making the prospect of a permanent and sustainable peace, environmental preservation and social justice seem unrealistic (given Man's supposedly aggressive, competitive and self-interested nature).

### **Militarism**

Perhaps the most important example of how gender-blindness obscures our understanding of environmental problems is militarism. Mainstream analyses generally assume rationality and hence do not explain irrational and homicidal policy choices, such as *war*, to acquire oil or other resources in lieu of conservation and self-reliance, or the lack of investment in peaceful relationships and a safe, secure future. More importantly, however, is that they offer little guidance as to what to do about it. Pointing out the irrationality of warfare has not been a very successful strategy thus far. In chapter 11, we consider a feminist analysis of militarism; in Chapter 12, we examine ecofeminist strategy. Here, the discussion is limited to gender-blindness in relation to militarism.

As over 90 percent of violent crime is perpetrated by men, even in a stable society such as Australia,<sup>1</sup> and as nuclear weapons are a product of the male mind, a gender-blind perspective can only mislead us in our efforts to put an end to militarism. It is interesting to note that, whereas most discussions concerned with ending militarism are studiously gender-blind, the military itself understands and manipulates sex roles to benefit the war business, and does so very well indeed. Let us take some examples of how notions of Femininity and Masculinity are used by militarists to manipulate both soldiers and citizenry to support military interests.

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<sup>1</sup> Heather Strang, 1991, *Homicides in Australia 1990-1991* (Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology) at p. 30. The most statistically verifiable data in this regard are prison census figures, but these only include those arrested. Precise figures are impossible to obtain because a high percentage of sexual and other violent assaults against women are not reported, as approximately 4 out of 5 such assaults are committed by men they know. A survey on survivors of sexual assaults conducted in 1992 by the Australian Institute of Criminology indicates that only 1 out of 5 serious offenses are reported. According to Dr. P. Eastaugh, therefore, the actual percentage of violent crime committed by men would be well over 90 percent (phone interview, April 16th, 1993).

First, in training, men are taught to despise and distance themselves from their Feminine side, or their emotions and feelings. "The experience of basic training traditionally implants Patriarchal values by reviling women as a foul and lowly class".<sup>1</sup> In weapons sales, advertising focuses on the sexual association of weaponry and power. As Carol Cohn notes: "Both the military itself and the arms manufacturers are constantly exploiting the phallic imagery and promise of sexual domination that their weapons so conveniently suggest".<sup>2</sup> In recruitment, advertising focuses on 'making a man out of you,' and the big sexy toys the soldiers will learn to use. In raising armies, citizens are manipulated by conceptions of Masculine and Feminine stereotypes and sex role expectations. Men should be macho and reckless; they should go to war to prove themselves. Women should be submissive and unquestioning; they should raise sons to be brave soldiers. In quelling dissent, peace activists are characterized in derogatory (read feminine) terms such as 'wimps', 'sissies', or 'poofers'.

In gaining public support for foreign interventions, the military has found that money, patriotism and self-interest are not sufficient - but challenging a nation's sense of Masculine pride works.<sup>3</sup> This accounts for the many incidents that have been engineered to portray the prospective enemy as a bully in order to justify a military solution, such as the Gulf of Tonkin incident of the Vietnam War, the Belgrano incident of the Falklands War (and the widely alleged encouragement by the United States for Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait in 1990).

In the Mexican War they offered \$2 a head to every young man who would enlist. They didn't get enough takers. They offered 100 acres to every veteran who went down and fought. They got a few takers. Then they put Zakery Taylor down to parade up and down the other side of the internationally-recognized border, a provocation, until the Mexican army fired on them. Then we had the head lines, "Mexicans killing our boys in Texas"; and the nation got fired up and fought Mexico and we annexed - we stole - Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, part of Colorado and the state of California.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, in strategy, Masculinity is used to manipulate the enemy for strategic purposes. For example, the West insulted Saddam Hussein's Masculine pride to induce him to stay in Kuwait apparently so they could attack: at least, it could hardly have been by accident that President Bush told Saddam Hussein publicly that if he did not get out by a certain date, they would 'kick his ass'. The militarists surely knew that this would make it impossible for Hussein to pull out.

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<sup>1</sup> Charlene Spretnak, 1989, "Naming the Cultural Forces that Push Us Toward War", in Russell, ed., *above* pp. 53-62 at p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Carol Cohn, 1989, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals" in Russell, ed., *above* pp. 127-159 at p. 134.

<sup>3</sup> See Howard Zinn, 1980, *A People's History of the United States* (N.Y.: HarperCollins).

<sup>4</sup> John Stockwell, a speech given at the World Affairs Conference, Boulder, Colorado (10 April 1987) audio tape by David Barsemian, 1825 Pearl St., Boulder CO. Stockwell worked 13 years for the CIA.

His Masculinity was at stake, and that is often more important to power-addicted men than life itself or - at least the lives of others.

Thus, there is little question that the military uses sex and gender, if only for mischievous purposes. In summary, then, because the Manstream is gender-blind, it (a) does not relate directly to third world problems, such as those caused by the androcentric international accounting system; (b) has no realistic or humane solution for the human population explosion; (c) does not account for environmental problems that result from our androcentric professional practices and decision-making processes; (d) is misleading with regard to the analysis of international politics, and finally; (e) is not helpful in analyzing militarism. Next, we turn to the inherent limitations of Manstream green theory.

## CHAPTER 11: PROBLEMS OF MANSTREAM THEORIES

We have looked at some examples of how political aspects of central environmental issues can be obscured by androcentrism and gender-blindness, with militarism perhaps the most profound case of this. In this Chapter, I show that some of the elements of the androcentric premise are found not only in the theories comprising the dominant paradigm, but in *radical* critiques of it as well. I suggest that radical environmentalism, with the exception of ecofeminism, still retains vestiges of male-centredness and gender-blindness, and certain premises of mainstream thought that work against its program for social transformation. More importantly, they do not adequately challenge the underlying bases of the ethic and ideology that they seek to change: to varying extents, they share with mainstream social and political theory the implicit view of humans as ideally Masculine, 'rational', and/or striving for emancipation from natural and social constraints. Therefore, although radical environmental theories contribute important insights into the multi-faceted nature of the environmental crisis, their usefulness is limited. To exemplify this, I compare the gender-neutral analysis of militarism with a feminist one.

Some qualifications are necessary here. First, it would be well beyond the scope of the project to properly criticize radical theories in depth. My purpose is only to show the pervasiveness of the androcentric premise. Therefore, I merely point out some feminists critiques of these theories and show how the Patriarchal assumptions they identify reflect aspects of mainstream attitudes towards nature. Second, I repeat that environmentalists, being well-rounded people, do not fit well into square theories. Indeed, many activists are anti-theory, which means that they are unaware of the extent to which their thinking has been shaped by theory. Finally, of course, this critique applies only to First World environmentalists. We will begin with the least 'green'.

### Vestiges of androcentrism

#### Marxism

Marxists are at the fringe of the environmental movement (at best) because many have not abandoned their faith in industrial technology, the implicit view of 'progress' as emancipation from nature, and the disbelief in essential limits to growth. However, their critique of capitalism is an important component of environmental theory. Marx cannot fairly be accused of Masculine 'essentialism' (that is, the implicit assumption that human nature is synonymous with characteristics attributed to men). To Marx, humans create their own nature through the



act of transforming and manipulating nature. While Marx did not see human nature as given, however, he did see human nature in terms of male norms. That is, Man's essence was in 'doing' (Masculine) rather than in 'being' (Feminine). For Marx, to become 'free' was the ultimate goal of Man's existence,<sup>1</sup> and freedom was achieved by mastery of nature through labour. Self-realization, then, meant mind over nature, a legacy of Western thought dating back to at least Plato.<sup>2</sup>

Also, freedom (from nature) was perceived of as an evolutionary process (based perhaps on Darwinism and observations of newly industrialized England). Both Marx and Engels began with the recognition that Man is causally interactive with the environment, but conceived this in terms of a linear and forward progression. In keeping with the Western tradition of valuing most that which distinguishes Man from nature and women, Man's dignity was held to lie in his ability to master nature, to plan and to make his own history. Also, in Marxism was the idea that reproductive labour for basic needs and sustenance (most of which is done by women) was a lower form of activity than 'productive' work which transforms nature according to conscious design.<sup>3</sup> The above suggests why, as Maria Mies observed, Marx failed to appreciate the extent to which Man's freedom through labour and technology is made possible by power relationships which allow the expropriation of a surplus from women and non-human nature.<sup>4</sup>

Orthodox EcoMarxists have also generally assumed that scientific 'laws of nature' and instrumental reason would enable Man to predict and control the consequences of disrupting natural processes. Solutions to environmental problems are dictated by Masculinist terms, such as control, choice, and change, rather than the Feminist concerns of relationship, communication, and caring that are requisite for living in harmony with nature. Thus, ecoMarxists share the approach of mainstream capitalist environmental management that does not prevent environmental problems, but rather predicts, monitors, and mitigates them.

Finally, while class is a feminist issue, many Marxists have attacked feminism for not centring on class (although ecofeminism analysis encompasses sex, race, class, and the abuse

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<sup>1</sup> See generally Nancy Holmstrom, 1990, "A Marxist theory of Women's Nature", in Cass R. Sunstein ed., *Feminism and Political Theory* (IL: University of Chicago Press).

<sup>2</sup> Carol C. Gould, 1978, *Marx's Social Ontology: Individuality and Community in Marx's Theory of Social Reality* (Cambridge MA: The MIT Press) at p. 108.

<sup>3</sup> For a feminist analysis of Marxism, see Linda Nicholson, 1987, "Feminism and Marx: Integrating Kinship with the Economic", in Seyla Benhabib and Drucilla Cornell, eds., *Feminism as Critique* (Cambridge: Polity Press).

<sup>4</sup> Maria Mies, 1986, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale* (London: Zed Books). See also Maria Mies, Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen and Claudia Von Werlhof, 1988, *Women: The Last Colony* (London: Zed Books).

of nature). This is because, paradoxically, ecoMarxists have resisted seeing women as a class or caste (partly because class is related to one's paid occupation). Just like the working class and members of 'minority' races, women are generally second-class citizens, although some individuals can escape the discrimination and disadvantages associated with their class. If women are about half the world's population, perform about 66 percent of the world's work, get 10 percent of the world's income and own less than 1 percent of the world's property, they are not well off as a class.<sup>1</sup> (Also, even men of the lowest levels of society usually have a woman in a subordinate relationship to them.)

### Critical Theorists

Critical Theorists such as Jürgen Habermas, Max Horkheimer, and Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse have challenged that desire to control nature and engineer society which characterizes both capitalism and Marxism. They were concerned that science, technology, and instrumental reason were not designed to help society address fundamental social goals.<sup>2</sup> With the rise of industrial capitalism, they observed, the idealistic conception of 'reason' elevated by the Enlightenment had been replaced by a technical, calculative, and hollow rationality. In the technical sphere, rationality had come to mean assessing means to *given* ends, such as the production of commodities. While this technocratic style of reasoning served the needs of production, it came to dominate civil life as well. Over time, methods designed for controlling and expropriating nature had led to the control of mind and culture as well. The machine began to dominate the human.

With the exception of some later works, much of critical theory has failed to appreciate that the reductionist scientific method, instrumental rationality and bureaucratic institutions that have colonized the human psyche were grounded in, and legitimized by, a Patriarchal construction of reality. While challenging the technocratic control and engineering of society, it took as given that Man's highest purpose lay in His ability to achieve progress by transforming nature. Thus Critical Theory essentially endorsed the Enlightenment values of reason, freedom and progress as conceived in Masculine terms.

Gender-blindness is particularly notable in Habermas. He distinguishes system-integrated action contexts (as in the economy and administrative apparatus), as against the 'lifeworld', or socially-integrated action contexts (as in personal and political interaction). But Nancy Fraser has argued that these ostensibly gender-neutral categories, which correspond roughly to public and private spheres, obscured the reality of male dominance and the appropriation of women's

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<sup>1</sup> International Labour Organisation statistics adopted by the United Nations in 1980. Source: National Women's Consultative Council, 1991, *A Question of Balance* (Report to the Hon. Wendy Fatin, MHR) Appendix D p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Frank Hearn, 1985, *Reason and Freedom in Sociological Thought* (Boston: Allen & Unwin).

labour in both spheres.<sup>1</sup> This form of 'critical' theory, then, was creating a dualism that inadvertently deflected analysis away from the gendered nature of power relationships, and the logic of domination that links the system-integrated and socially integrated action contexts (Patriarchy).

Marcuse, on the other hand, called for a new kind of science that would integrate substantive reason with technocratic rationality, and envisaged a future Feminine society. However, Shiva has argued that Marcuse saw these traits as biologically created and exclusive in nature, rather than an outcome of an ideological construct,<sup>2</sup> thereby missing an important dimension of the maintenance of power relations. Moreover, the purpose of this new science was still to liberate people from nature,<sup>3</sup> rather than to enable them to live in harmony with nature.

### Ecosocialism

Ecosocialists<sup>4</sup> such as Raymond Williams, Joe Weston, and Martin Ryle, focus on the effects of capitalist (and state communist) economic and class structures in relation to environmental and social problems. Quite reasonably, they locate the root of social and ecological problems in the control of resources and accumulation of wealth by the few. However, their platform is largely limited to structural change: to redistribute power to those who would presumably conserve and manage resources in the public interest. The implicit assumption is that hierarchy is necessary for society to function. "The exercise of power, the submission of some to the will of others, is inevitable in modern society; nothing whatever is accomplished without it".<sup>5</sup>

Socialists therefore share with liberals the view of social reform as an organizational matter: a question of rearranging external social relations. This is because socialist (and liberal) critiques do not adequately theorize the personal dimension of power. They fail to link the Masculine psyche with the power structures themselves and to recognize that 'the personal is political'.<sup>6</sup> In contrast, an ecofeminist approach would add to a structural analysis of class

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<sup>1</sup> Nancy Fraser, 1987, "What's Critical about Critical Theory", in Benhabib and Cornell eds., *above* pp. 31-56 at p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Vandana Shiva, 1990, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development* (London: Zed Books) at pp. 51-52. But see Ariel Salleh, 1991, "From Centre to Margin", *Hypatia: a Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 6, pp. 206-214, for a criticism of this position.

<sup>3</sup> See Martin Ryle, 1988, *Ecology and Socialism* (London: Century Hutchinson).

<sup>4</sup> A clear distinction between ecomarxists and ecosocialists is difficult to make. The division I make here may appear somewhat arbitrary, but should suffice for these limited purposes.

<sup>5</sup> J.K. Galbraith, 1983, *The Anatomy of Power* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin). Galbraith, while perhaps not in the same camp, has been very influential.

<sup>6</sup> See Andre Gorz, 1980, *Ecology as Politics*, trans. by P. Vigderman and J. Cloud (London: Pluto) whose proposals rely on the State to provide for the collective needs of the people.

relations one which take into account the underlying logic which legitimizes oppression - the Power Paradigm. Ecofeminists believe that if our societies do not move beyond power on both political and personal levels, reforms or revolutions will amount to no more than musical chairs over the long term.<sup>1</sup> Whoever is in power will be subject to corruptive influences because of the personal insecurities and need for status and power engendered by a Patriarchal culture. Thus, ecofeminism "challenges all relations of domination. Its goal is not just to change who wields power, but to transform the structure of power itself".<sup>2</sup>

While socialists understand the links between environmental exploitation and capitalism, their program for conservation is not dissimilar to that proposed by capitalists. Capitalists have defended their position vis- a-vis the environment by arguing that 'efficient' use of resources conserves them. Of course, although capitalist competition is associated with efficiency, it is *price* efficiency, not the efficient use of resources. Price efficiency has been achieved by externalizing the social costs of development, or passing on the health and safety costs to the general public wherever possible. Socialists, on the other hand, call for more equity as well as more efficiency, but it is nonetheless an approach that can only slow the rate of consumption, not preserve nature.

### Mainstream greens

Mainstream greens, many of whom share the above blind spot, are the vast majority of environmental activists. The 'green movement' includes those who recognize the fundamental interconnections between social justice, peace, democracy, non-violence and environmental quality. (When referring to the political wing of the green movement, such as mainstream non-governmental organizations and parties, I use a capital 'G'. When referring to informal grass roots groups, I use a small 'g'.) While socialists are less concerned with industrialism than who controls it, greens tend to attack industrialism itself.<sup>3</sup>

I shall be arguing two things in this chapter: first, that the similarities between these two dominant ideologies [capitalism and communism] are of greater significance than their differences, and that the dialectic between them is therefore largely superficial. If this is the case, it may be claimed that they are united in one, all-embracing 'super-ideology', which, for the sake of convenience, I intend to call industrialism. Secondly, that this super-ideology, in that it is conditioned to thrive on

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<sup>1</sup> Argued thoroughly by Marilyn, French, 1985, *Beyond Power: Women, Men and Morals* (London: Jonathon Cape).

<sup>2</sup> Starhawk, 1989, "Power, Authority, and Mystery: Ecofeminism and Earth-based Spirituality", in Plant, ed., *Healing the Wounds*, above pp. 73-86 at p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> John Young, 1991, *Sustaining the Earth: The Past, Present and Future of the Green Revolution* (Sydney: NSW University Press) at p. 160.

the ruthless exploitation of both people and planet, is *itself* the greatest threat we face.<sup>1</sup>

They have developed policies and programs that would be consistent with an ecologically-sustainable society, such as appropriate (small-scale) technologies and recycling, participatory democracy and decentralized communities, redefinitions of work and job sharing. However, the mainstream generally accepts the given political system as adequate, relying on building numbers to bring about better policies. In theorizing the causes of our irrational, lemming-like charge toward biospheric collapse, they, like Leftists, assume that Man is 'rational'. Therefore, they hope to achieve social change by, in essence, an appeal to reason: raising the level of public awareness, lobbying, and promoting an appreciation of the intrinsic value of nature. This strategy does not address what really *motivates* people, which I suggest are emotional needs, such as the need for love, recognition, and a sense of belonging.

Further, this strategy tends to reinforce the credibility of the Greens who still, by and large, believe in a flat earth. For example, Greens implicitly credit parliamentarians with an interest in pushing a particular policy orientation or getting re-elected (means - ends rationality). The strategy does not look behind 'self-interest' to the underlying desire for (say) sex, love, and admiration. Thus, they fail to take into account the fact that when parliamentarians 'have the courage to make unpopular decisions' as dictated by corporate interests, they can escape via the 'revolving door' between business and industry. *Acceptance* by the big boy's club can be more important than re-election. Despite voluminous tomes of mainstream theory to the contrary, Man does not tick by reason alone. But even were it so, numbers games cannot succeed in the long term in a system where the crucial decisions are made outside the political arena.

### Deep ecology

Deep ecologists also credit Man with 'rationality'. However, they reason that Man's failure to identify and empathize with the rest of nature results from the way He experiences or visualizes the world, as if it were this that underlay power relations. They believe it is human-chauvinism or anthropocentrism that has led to our separation from non-human nature.<sup>2</sup> Hence, personal transformation through the cultivation of a 'biocentric' perspective - expanding one's identification to encompass all of nature - could eventually heal society as a

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathon Porritt, 1984, *Seeing Green: The Politics of Ecology Explained* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell) at p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> For an introduction to deep ecology, see Warwick Fox, 1990, *Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism* (Boston: Shambhala); Bill Devall, 1988, *Simple in Means, Rich in Ends* (Salt Lake: Gibbs Smith); Arne Naess, 1989, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle* trans. by David Rothenberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Bill Devall and George Sessions, 1985, *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered* (Salt Lake: Gibbs Smith). Reputedly the earliest expression of deep ecology was in 1922: Martin Buber, 1958, *I and Thou*. trans. by Ronald B. Smith, 2nd ed. (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons).

whole. Deep ecology also ultimately relies upon reason to persuade people to take up deep ecology. Rational Man, once realizing that to harm nature is to harm Himself, will change His ways.

While sharing a biocentric perspective, ecofeminists have criticized deep ecology because of its Masculinist bias, being abstract, aloof, impersonal, gender-blind and ignoring power relations.<sup>1</sup> Under the illusion of being all-inclusive, deep ecologists still generally deny the significance of gender and feminist analysis and therefore, in effect, perpetuate the dualistic thinking that they seek to transform.<sup>2</sup> By subsuming women under a gender-neutral model of Man, they paradoxically exclude women and set them apart. A gender-blind analysis that centres on Man's relationship to nature also does little to explain power-relations *within* societies. Therefore, deep ecology cannot adequately theorize or remedy the abuse of power.<sup>3</sup> An approach based on 'spiritual' transformation is insufficient to bring about behavioural change, let alone social change. I will discuss at length below this Liberalist approach to social transformation (the strategy that relies on changing individual values).

### Social ecology

Social ecology, in contrast, does address the issue of dominance relationships. Social ecology is a school of thought that follows the work of Murray Bookchin.<sup>4</sup> It traces the origins of the exploitation of nature to hierarchical social institutions, beginning with gerontocracy and Patriarchy. Social ecologists reason that dominance relationships among humans lead to the objectification, control, and manipulation of others, and hence similar attitudes toward non-human nature. As with deep ecologists and ecofeminists, they advocate radical social transformation in the direction of non-hierarchical and more communal, decentralized societies.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, see Ariel Salleh's seminal 1984, "Deeper than Deep Ecology", *Environmental Ethics* 6, pp. 335-341; Val Plumwood, 1991, "Nature, Self, and Gender: Feminism, Environmental Philosophy, and the Critique of Rationalism", *Hypatia* 6 (1) pp. 3-27; Marti Kheel, 1991, "Ecofeminism and Deep Ecology: Reflections on Identity and Difference", *The Trumpeter: Journal of Ecophilosophy* 8 (2) pp. 62-72.

<sup>2</sup> Most books on deep ecology scarcely mention women or ecofeminism, although deep ecologists have been harshly criticised for being male-centred. For example, Bill Devall, 1988, *Simple in Means, Rich in Ends: Practicing Deep Ecology* (UT: Gibbs Smith). Several pages about the Chipko movement in India are focused on Sunderlai Bahuguma, a *spokesman* for the Chipko movement, rather than upon the sacrifices of the (mostly women and children) grass roots activists themselves (see p. 128-134).

<sup>3</sup> See George Bradford, 1989, *How Deep is Deep Ecology?* (Hadley, MA: Times Change Press).

<sup>4</sup> See Murray Bookchin, 1982, *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy* (CA: Cheshire Books).

Fundamental to Bookchin's theory, however, is a rather Masculinist conception of evolution.<sup>1</sup> As humans are integral to nature, their conversion of the non-human world is seen as a natural part of an evolutionary progress toward differentiation and complexity to which all life forms are held to subjectively strive. From a scientific standpoint, this purposive view of evolution is rather dated.<sup>2</sup> A similar Masculinist conception of evolution has led to weird but popular notions like "we are meant to colonize outer space when we outgrow earth".

Also, this Masculinist notion of humans as stewards and of an inherent 'purpose' in nature does not sit well with deep ecologist and ecofeminist attitudes toward non-human nature.<sup>3</sup> But, more importantly, giving pre-eminence and universality to Masculine forms of rationality and freedom reinforces the existing gendered hierarchy of the Power Paradigm, with women arguably fully human only to the extent they adopt to the Masculine ideal.

### Common failings

Each of the above Manstream environmental theories had made important contributions in analyzing determinants of the environmental crisis. They theorize industrial technology, instrumental rationality, capitalism, anthropocentrism, narrow identification, class, and social hierarchy - which are essential components of any environmental problem analysis. They fail to recognize, however, what those determinants have in common: they are embedded and germinated in a Patriarchal construction of reality. Thus, in effect, they fail to undermine adequately the very pathologies they would exorcise from society. Some of these shortcomings of the Manstream radical theory can be summarized as follows:

1) By not explicitly addressing the need to rebalance the Feminine and Masculine in our selves and society, they unconsciously perpetuate the notion of the Feminine as a subset or a negation of the 'real world' of men. This militates against the possibility of an alternative morality based on empathy and cooperation.

2) They are partial, in that (with the exception of social ecology) they do not really explore or integrate both individual/perceptual and institutional/structural impediments to social transformation.

3) They offer either *spiritual* strategies (concerned with perception and values) or *rationalist* ones (concerned with structure and process). Thus, they do not satisfy the (apparent) need for a 'holistic', integrated perspective.

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<sup>1</sup> See Mary Midgely, 1985, *Evolution as a Religion: Strange Hopes and Stranger Fears* (London: Methuen).

<sup>2</sup> Stephen J. Gould, 1989, *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History* (Marmondsworth: Penguin Books).

<sup>3</sup> See Murray Bookchin's response to such arguments in Murray Bookchin, 1990, "Recovering Evolution: A Reply to Eckersley and Fox", *Environmental Ethics* 12, pp. 253-74.

4) They fail to explore the implications of the fact that the pathologies identified as 'causes' of environmental problems coincide with the elevation of values that have been central to Masculine identity for centuries (in Western culture at least), such as competitive individualism, instrumentalism, and progress as increasing freedom from natural constraints.

5) They share many androcentric assumptions with the dominant paradigm and therefore fail to demystify the ideological props that support the exploitation of nature, such as the idea that humanity is by nature Masculine. (That is, while radical theorists do not subscribe to the Patriarchal interpretation of human nature, they fail to adequately address its foundation.)

6) They do not adequately theorize the false dualisms that have been used to maintain powerful interests, such as capitalist/communist, male/female, black/white (Chapter 12). These are made plausible and encoded by 'hierarchical dualism' - the organizing principle of Patriarchal thought. Dualisms are manipulated to conceal the exploitative nature of hierarchical power relationships.

7) Their problem analyses are one-dimensional in that they reduce social and environmental problems to specific pathologies within Patriarchal society, while seeing Patriarchy itself as a marginal, coincidental phenomenon having mostly to do with only individual rights. These linear analyses also lead to a competition among *superficially* incompatible ideas that can divide the environmental movement (such as friction between social versus deep ecology ).<sup>1</sup>

8) Because they are gender blind, and fail to acknowledge the significance of the relation between gender identity and view of the self (and hence personal morality), they cannot adequately theorize the abuse of power at either personal or political levels.

9) They fail to recognize the practical problems of Patriarchal ambition in social movements, such as the systemic sexism that excludes those who are not Masculine-identified from meaningful participation in the environment movement or public life generally.<sup>2</sup>

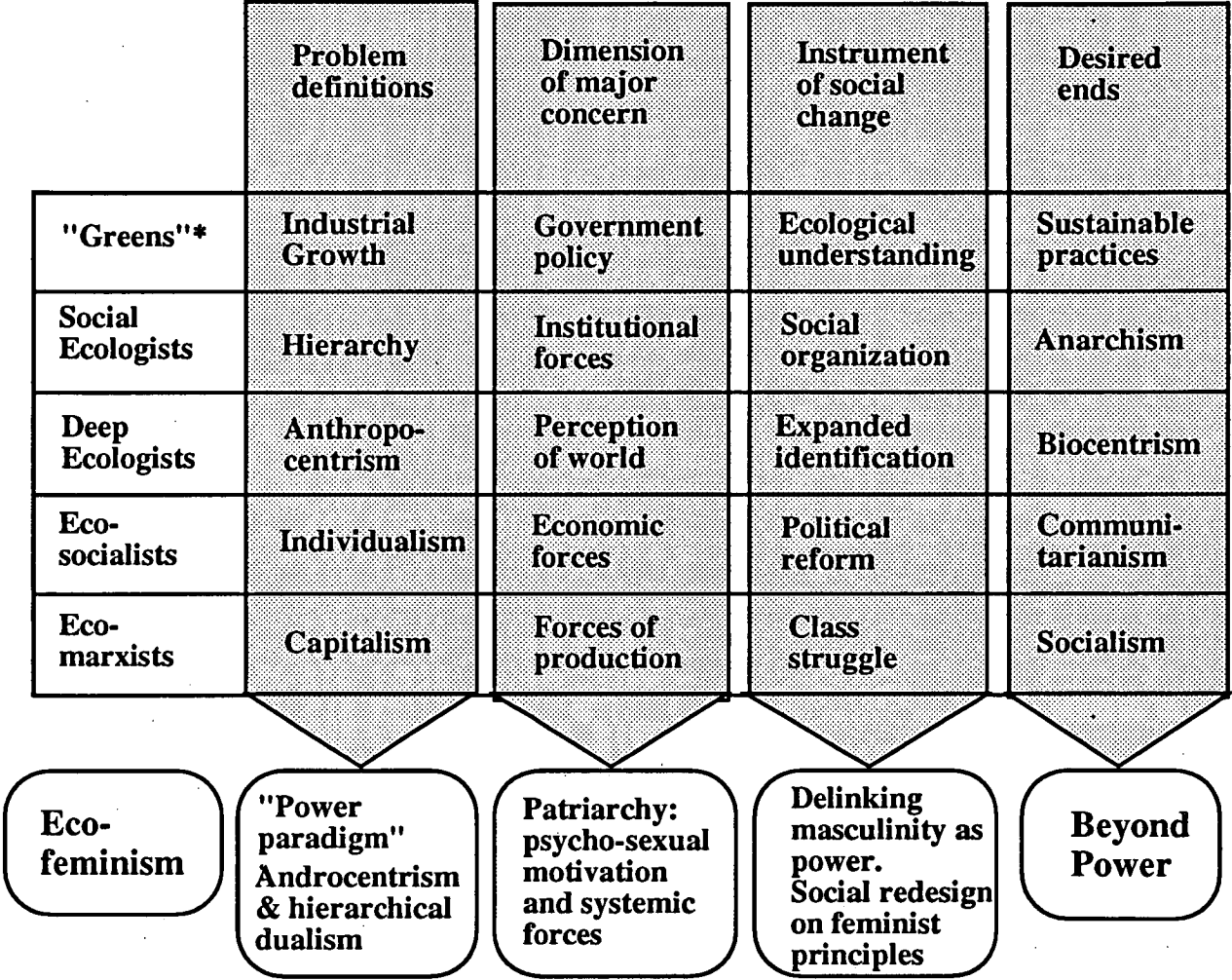
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<sup>1</sup> See Murray Bookchin, Dave Foreman, Steve Chase, and David Levine, 1991, *Defending the Earth: A Dialogue between Murray Bookchin and Dave Foreman* (MA: South End Press) which excludes ecofeminism from the debate, although it could bridge the two positions.

<sup>2</sup> Of the top 25 environmental organizations in the U.S. in 1991, for example, only 3 were headed by women, although it is widely acknowledged that women volunteers far outnumber the men. Elizabeth Larsen, 1991, "Granola Boys, Eco-Dudes, and Me", *Ms. Magazine* (July/August) pp. 96-7 at p. 96.



Figure 13: Radical environmental analyses



\*note: I distinguish "Green" from the general green movement

The ecofeminist paradigm, on the other hand, helps to explain both the psychological and systemic manifestations of the androcentric value system and personal and political expressions of insecurity and dominance. It accommodates both the perceptual/spiritual and analytical/rational approaches, and addresses both personal and systemic barriers to social change (as indicated in figure 13). It therefore provides a holistic framework that can draw upon and integrate the insights developed by Manstream radical critiques. Diversity of theory, view, and approach is important to preserve, but it is also nice to have a perspective that can weave the threads together. Of course, other theories have the potential to do so, but they have resisted a gender-balanced perspective (an ecological theory which integrates feminism becomes an 'ecofeminist' theory).

The above critique of radical theories, as they pertain to the environment, is to support my contention that ecofeminism, at least as much as other theories, provides a comprehensive analysis which can contribute to everyone's understanding of the roots of the environmental problem. Moreover, rather than being marginal and irrelevant to the intellectual domain (as still conveyed by the treatment of ecofeminism in Mainstream green literature), ecofeminism holds the potential for a truly alternative paradigm that could assist in the creation of a sustainable society.

## Bionomics

It may seem harsh to criticize green thought, while leaving the lunatic mainstream unscathed. As indicated earlier, however, there is no need to specify the general biases against sustainability contained in capitalist and state socialist positions, as they have been adequately covered in green literature elsewhere. (As explained in Part II, I do not oppose markets, but contend that their application and scope should be coordinated and confined within a new system of governance.) Nonetheless, there is a recent development in mainstream thought that merits attention. New concepts in physics and biology are being appropriated to legitimize hierarchical, large-scale, capitalist structures and the concomitant ethic of dog-eat-dog survivalism. Perhaps the most cogent representation of this trend is found in Michael L. Rothchild's 'best-selling' *Bionomics, the Inevitability of Capitalism* (London: Futura: 1992).<sup>1</sup> Given space limitations, I use this recent book as representative of a 'new capitalism', because it is comprehensively and masterfully (though speciously) argued.

Bionomics (Rothchild's term) holds that "a parallel relationship exists between an ecosystem based on genetic information and an economy derived from technical information".<sup>2</sup> In other words, economic development is shaped by a society's accumulated technical knowledge, just as biological evolution is shaped by genes, or DNA. Capitalism, he says, is simply the process by which technology evolves.<sup>3</sup> Rothchild's (ostensible) thesis, then, is that a capitalist economy can best be comprehended as an evolving ecosystem. This, in itself, is merely a heuristic device; it is not unreasonable to apply such a model to the economy to see what new pathways this opens for exploration. However, he uses his analogy less as a paradigm, in the Kuhnian sense, than as a foil to argue that capitalism is a natural, rather than a Man-made, phenomena.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael L. Rothchild, 1992, *Bionomics, the Inevitability of Capitalism* (London: Futura).

<sup>2</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. xiii.

<sup>3</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. xiii.

Rothchild's book reflects a trend which is particularly ominous because it makes use of an appeal to new scientific facts and ecological insights to promote economic determinism and environmental fatalism. Many citizens do not have the time or energy to analyze the specious reasoning which supports such 'argumentation by headlines'. Let us look at some of the flaws in his 'oil logic'.

Traditional forms of socialist and capitalist economic analysis have failed so tragically, Rothchild explains, because they are based on the concept of 'equilibrium' and the metaphor of the machine. The result is that conventional economic methodology relies on resources, population, and technology 'being fixed', which is in marked contrast with a turbulent reality. By drawing analogies using new concepts in evolution, chaos theory and microbiology, Rothchild is able to shed more light on a range of events, such as the meteoric rise of Japan in relation to America and the fall of the Soviet Union. He also uses analogy to provide a compelling rationale for his market-based policy proposals, such as de-bureaucratizing the education system, democratizing corporations, enacting a consumption tax (combined with a tax rebate) and creating a market in pollution 'rights'.

As a descriptive framework, then, Rothchild's 'ecological' model is at least provocative. However, his real agenda is crassly political: he uses the analogy between genetic information and accumulated technological knowledge (slightly collapsing the time scale of biological evolution) to 'prove' the natural superiority of capitalism. Bionomics turns out to be a fancy rendition of the conventional argument that *only* capitalism can respond quickly enough to rapidly developing technology through competition. And, "in both realms and at all levels, competition is evolution's shaping force".<sup>1</sup>

The trick he employs is this. With one hand Rothchild takes pains to explain that he is only posing an 'imperfect' analogy between the capitalist's economy and nature's ecology. In this way, he can excuse the fact that his analogies have a certain 'selectiveness'. For example, 'predators' in nature are deemed parallel to 'consumers' rather than, say, 'developers'.<sup>2</sup> If, however, one analogized resource extraction firms as large carnivores who pounce on public resources to feed themselves and their own pups, then consumers would be seen as maggots, wholly dependent upon the spoils of these predatory behemoths.

Also, most of his analogies could be used to argue for cooperation as well as for competition. For example, the slime mould, which is used by Rothchild as somehow illustrative of market dynamics, has been used by the environmentalist Jonathon Porritt to argue for cooperation in the face of environmental catastrophe. Other analogies are of more concern

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<sup>1</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 214-215.

(and less droll). Take, for example, the parallel he draws between quite different kinds of energy sources. While sunlight powers the ecosystem, he says, human work powers the economic system<sup>1</sup> - rather than, say, fuels derived from non-human resources that producers and workers consume. In this instance, Rothchild is treating ecology as a separate though parallel system, as if the economy were autonomous from nature (which, incidentally, contradicts his position that capitalism is natural).

Yet, with the other hand, Rothchild maintains that his analogy dictates that capitalism is inevitable. Put differently, while the ecology is, in his view, only a parallel (rather than a foundational) system, the capitalist social order must be dictated by the same universal laws of evolution. This relies on an entirely new form of logic. Thus, while socialism is, he says, just an ideology, "capitalism is a natural phenomenon".<sup>2</sup> And, "being for or against a natural phenomenon is a waste of time and mental energy".<sup>3</sup>

Like other economic determinists, Rothchild is also a master of presenting false choices, or rather, no choices at all. For example, he takes as self-evident that there are only two forms of social organization: state socialism or capitalism. The former is no choice at all, of course, as "any economy that disrupts the interplay of immutable organic forces is inherently flawed and doomed to failure".<sup>4</sup> Complex hierarchies are natural, he tells us,<sup>5</sup> but apparently large-scale, hierarchical organizations are only preordained by natural laws if they are run by capitalists and not by the state. Instead, capitalists hierarchies are somehow "decentralized, self-organizing evolutionary systems" which manage to make the most of scarce resources.<sup>6</sup> Rothchild does not, however, discuss the decentralized, self-organizing systems proposed by greens, preferring to paint greens as either having no political awareness at all, or as being "Red-Greens", whose "radical totalitarian program", he says, calls for "unlimited state power".<sup>7</sup>

While Rothchild dismisses environmentalists as 'ignorant', he fails to address several tenets of the capitalist faith that greens have questioned. Let us examine some of these. The first tenet is that there is no limit to growth. No problem, he says: "in a world of fixed resources, learning allows the economic pie to keep growing. Economic growth is limited only by human creativity".<sup>8</sup> (But if natural resources are a product of the human imagination, does this mean

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<sup>1</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 329.

<sup>3</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. xv.

<sup>4</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 107.

<sup>5</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. xiv.

<sup>6</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 272.

<sup>7</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 281.

<sup>8</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 336.

that 10 billion people will be able to generate more space and amenity than 5 billion are now able to do?)

The second tenet he uncritically espouses is that, since there is no limit to economic growth, there is no desirable limit to the size of businesses. They will not run out of resources as long as they can create either more demand or more consumers. (Firms, like dinosaurs, can get bigger and bigger, can they not?)

In nature, the population of a species is constrained primarily by the availability of resources ... Ecosystems are 'resource-limited' networks ... By contrast, an industry's size is limited by customer demand, not the availability of resources. Under capitalism, firms die for lack of paying customers, not for lack of supplies.<sup>1</sup>

Third, technology can solve any constraints through greater efficiency. "A firm's efficiency is constrained only by its technology, and its technology is limited only by its members' ability to work together as an intelligent, creative organization".<sup>2</sup> And, of course, technology can solve anything. (Over-consumption and over-population will thankfully never become a problem, then, as firms can simply develop technologies to make us smaller!)

A fourth tenet of capitalist thought which Rothchild takes as gospel is that wealth will 'trickle down' to the poor. The solution to poverty is therefore simple: "an economy of abundance where real costs continue to decline, so that even the poorest members of society eventually gain access to benefits once reserved for the very rich".<sup>3</sup> Rothchild says aggressive investment in technology - not redistribution - is the only solution to poverty.<sup>4</sup> He finds support for this in his patently absurd contention that the 'green revolution' (industrialized agriculture) has solved many of the problems of the Third World.

In the wake of the 1960s Green Revolution, even India now exports food. Once commonplace, famines now are regarded as inexcusable, freakish tragedies. Hunger and malnutrition are still rife in the Third World, but widespread starvation strikes only where technology has yet to transform human existence.<sup>5</sup>

In reality, the green revolution increased productivity and corporate profits, but at the expense of local self-sufficiency and environmental sustainability. This is explained in Vandana Shiva's (1991) work *The Violence of the Green Revolution. Third World Agriculture*,

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<sup>1</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 184.

<sup>4</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 248.

<sup>5</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 235.

*Ecology and Politics* which documents many of the economic, social and ecological problems created by the green revolution in India.<sup>1</sup>

The logic of Rothchild's basic social position is this: equity *requires* unfairness (double speak!).<sup>2</sup> For example, the well educated should be paid substantially more than others (at least if they have degrees in marketable subjects), as "income redistribution makes dollar earning streams *more* equal by making percentage returns on educational investment *less* equal."<sup>3</sup> This is to say that the return on one's investment in higher education is diminished unless the less bright or educated people (or those who cannot afford an education) earn less. Therefore, when he later proceeds to admit that growth and fairness are inversely related, we can take comfort in the fact that the unfairness associated with growth is 'equitable'. While not against some form of social 'safety net', he says, societies must make a trade-off on the growth/fairness spectrum: "simply put, every nation faces an inescapable trade-off between its rate of long-term economic growth and the 'fairness' of its income distribution".<sup>4</sup>

Finally, Rothchild disregards the inherent lack of life quality and political choice created by market totalitarianism. While conceding that a choice between 113 breakfast cereals is not substantive, central planning - the only other alternative he allows - means nothing at all on the shelves. Moreover, Rothchild suggests that the creation of diverse consumer choices in capitalism amounts to political choice. His reasoning: *more* TV channels means that political power cannot be concentrated in the hands of a "clique of network executives".<sup>5</sup> (But what if those network executives were themselves in the hands of a clique?) Because capitalism is not an ideology, but life itself, the fact that all channels support and reflect capitalism should not offend anyone's sense of freedom and choice. As Rothchild assures us, there is no need to debate the ethical implications of capitalism, as "a natural process cannot be right or wrong. A natural process has no moral character".<sup>6</sup> (His definition of 'natural' is conveniently left unclear).

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<sup>1</sup> Vandana Shiva, 1991, *The Violence of the Green Revolution: Third World Agriculture, Ecology and Politics* (London: Zed Books).

<sup>2</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 240.

<sup>4</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 246.

<sup>5</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 219.

<sup>6</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 341.

Although Rothchild distinguishes his position from that of biological determinists,<sup>1</sup> his position is based on similar assumptions about the intrinsic nature of the world and human character. "In a civilized world, normal human beings seek security for themselves and their families by accumulating power and wealth. Now, it is the survival instinct in action."<sup>2</sup> But it is one thing to theorize about human instincts, and it is another thing to suggest that those human instincts dictate certain (inequitable) forms of social control that favour an entrenched power elite. *Bionomics* is a chilling reminder that, only 50 years ago, Social Darwinists distorted concepts like 'natural selection' and 'survival of the fittest' to justify the extreme forms of racism and nationalism that culminated in the Nazi Holocaust.

Rothchild is not stupid. In fact, he is a remarkably clever exponent of the capitalist faith. What enables such clever people to perpetuate these wild and crazy ideas without critical reflection? Perhaps a desire for acceptance by the big boys accounts for his motivation, but his intellectual edifice ultimately relies on the Patriarchal model of Impersonal Man. Rothchild's reduction of Man to a node in an evolving ecological network, in this regard, is no different from earlier conceptions of Man as a cog in a static machine.

But Rothchild's bionomics goes even further than traditional Patriarchal thought, which disassociates Man from the family, community and nature. Bionomics is the polarized (Masculine) model of Man taken to its conclusion: self-destruction. He goes on to suggest, again by analogy, that the only 'real' purpose of existence is organizational survival. Just as the goal of each biological organism is the survival of the genetic information it carries in order to reproduce itself, the goal of each human organization is the survival of its technological information.<sup>3</sup> In Rothchild's paradigm, then, one-dimensional, goal-oriented, Impersonal Man is being supplanted by the capitalist organization He exists to serve. (Yet is this not supposed to be the capitalists' main objection to communism?)

The implications of this paradigm for non-material values, humans, and the rest of nature are tragic. As "the only enduring order is found in life's information", all life forms, from humans (or "biochemical vehicles") to mountains, are temporary: *only DNA is immortal*.<sup>4</sup> This view only provides a way of coping or turning off to the torture and extinction of fellow species and the demolition of ancient forests and rivers. To stop the 'Pac Man'-like colonization of the natural/social world by this 'Man-made' ideology, it is necessary to

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<sup>1</sup> Sociobiology could be considered a new form of Social Darwinism in that sociobiologists maintain that human culture is a product of genes. The initiator of this new field was Edward O. Wilson through his 1975 book *Sociobiology - The New Synthesis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

<sup>2</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 328.

<sup>3</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 213.

<sup>4</sup> Rothchild, 1992, *above* p. 4.

recognize that the polarized, essentialist model of Man upon which it is based is a mere construct of Patriarchy.

### Manstream green theory's treatment of militarism

It was argued above that Manstream green theory, as well as economic rationalism, begins from an androcentric model of Man and that this limits its value as theory. In the remainder of this chapter, I suggest that the androcentric perspective of Manstream greens is of limited analytical value as well. Because Manstream green theories do not adequately account for militarism, they tend to treat militarism as a separate issue, though recognizing the interdependence of social and environmental problems.<sup>1</sup> I would contend that an environmental theory that does not, by its basic logic, include an explanation for militarism is seriously flawed. My case rests on the magnitude of the environmental problems caused by military action and expenditure, even in peacetime. It has been estimated, for instance, that on the global level, the military produces about thirty percent of environmental degradation,<sup>2</sup> and the pollution it produces is of a particularly nasty and toxic kind. Nuclear and biological warfare testing is gradually poisoning the food chain of the entire planet, and revelations of nuclear waste dumping in Russia are making the inevitable seem less remote. There are up to 15,000 sites contaminated with toxics on U.S. military bases alone. The military also consumes vast amounts of non-renewable and precious resources. For example, it uses about 9 percent of steel and iron, and 25 percent of all jet fuel world wide.<sup>3</sup>

The diversion of financial resources is also staggering. Worldwatch Institute estimates that 15 percent of the amount spent on weapons in the world could eradicate most of the immediate causes of war and environmental destruction.<sup>4</sup> And, of course, military spending creates

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<sup>1</sup> In the United States, Canada, and Australia, peace and green activists have largely remained separate (Greenpeace notwithstanding). German green activists have consistently maintained the connections between these issues, however. See for example, Roland Vogt, 1983, "Ecology and Peace: Some Experiences of the Green Party", in Michael Denborough, ed., *Australia and Nuclear War* (ACT: Croom Helm) pp. 213-220.

<sup>2</sup> See Michael Renner, 1991, "Assessing the Military's War on the Environment", in Lester Brown et. al., *State of the World 1991* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin) and Michael Renner, 1990, "Converting to a Peaceful Economy"; in Lester Brown et. al., *State of the World 1990* (Sydney: Allen & Allen); Matthias Finger, 1991, "The Military, the Nation State and the Environment", *The Ecologist* 21 (5) pp. 22-23.

<sup>3</sup> Renner, 1991, *above*.

<sup>4</sup> See Lester R. Brown et al., 1990, *State of the World: A Worldwatch Institute Report on Progress Towards a Sustainable Society* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin) at p. 96



devastating economic problems through inflation and employment dislocation, as well as through the diversion of resources.<sup>1</sup>

There are also environmental costs of a more indirect nature on a scale that is almost incomprehensible. To take some random examples: most if not all global 'trouble spots' today are in areas that were colonized, divided and militarized by outside powers; the United States is saddled with a nuclear power industry that was initially created and promoted to subsidize the military;<sup>2</sup> and up to 50 countries have the ability to produce nuclear weapons, which means the potential for nuclear mischief in the Third World is now virtually uncontrollable, despite arms control among the superpowers. Western arms suppliers have provided the means to convert the once sustainable economies of indigenous peoples in the Third World to unstable, industrialized colonies that are economically dependent on transnational corporations, creating another kind of indirect environmental cost.

In short, it would be hard to single out another factor with greater adverse impact on the environment and human welfare than militarism. Yet, despite the interconnection between the military and environmental destruction, military activity - even in democracies - is virtually exempt from Parliamentary/Congressional oversight, let alone relevant forms of cost-benefit analysis, environmental impact assessments, or pollution standards. Likewise, militarism is often put in the 'too hard' basket by many conservative greens because it entails a critical analysis of capitalism and imperialism: it is too 'political'. On the other hand, Leftist greens often treat militarism merely as a *means* of capitalist expansion, and fail to analyze the internal dynamics or personal level of militarism itself; that is, what makes military decision makers and soldiers 'tick'.

I suggest that this is because the gender-blind analyses, or ones centring on human-chauvinism, reinforce the tendency to deny or screen out the psychological and personal dimensions of the abuse of power. Attention to androcentrism, on the other hand, contributes to a better understanding of militarism. Books such as *Exposing Nuclear Phallacies*, *Missile Envy* and *Fathering the Unthinkable* make the link between militarism and polarized Masculinity painfully obvious.<sup>3</sup> This resistance to looking at the personal or non-rational must

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<sup>1</sup> For the costs of war, see Frank Barnaby, ed., 1988, *The Gaia Peace Atlas* (NY: Doubleday). Also, see Paul Ekins, Mayer Hillman and Robert Hutchinson, 1992, *Wealth Beyond Measure: An Atlas of New Economics* (London: Gaia Books) at pp. 156-9.

<sup>2</sup> See John May, 1989, *The Greenpeace Book of the Nuclear Age: The Hidden History, the Human Cost* (NY: Pantheon Books) pp. 10-17.

<sup>3</sup> See Koen, Nina Swaim and Friends. *Ain't No Where We Can Run: Handbook for Women on the Nuclear Mentality* (VT: Wand); Helen Caldicott, 1984, *Missile Envy: The Arms Race and Nuclear War* (NY: Morrow); Diana E. H. Russell, ed., 1989, *Exposing Nuclear Phallacies* (NY: Pergamon Press); Brian Easlea, 1983, *Fathering the Unthinkable: Masculinity, Scientists and the Nuclear Arms Race* (London: Pluto Press).

be more than coincidental. Weaponry and militarism are part and parcel of the Masculine sphere. Yet, neither sex nor gender has been taken seriously as a category of analysis in militarism (at least until recently). Perhaps this is because the connection between war and the 'blueprint for Masculinity' is too uncomfortable to wear: it suggests that the causes of war are 'in here' as well as 'out there'.<sup>1</sup>

### Feminist analysis of militarism

A gender-based analysis introduces a new dimension in the explanation of militarism. In the following, we examine how the polarization of the Feminine and Masculine places many pressures on people, particularly men, that are reflected in militaristic behaviours. Specifically, to be Masculine is associated with (a) establishing dominance, which usually entails (b) having an adversary, (c) creating dependency, (d) separating and 'dehumanizing' and humiliating the other, and (e) the association of sex with conquest and violence.<sup>2</sup> The cult of Masculinity involves (f) suppressing emotions, (g) prevailing over others or 'winning' and, (h) sometimes, regarding battle as a form of initiation into manhood. In my view, none of these behaviours are adequately explained by human identification, but Masculine identification, on the other hand, is very revealing. (Again, of course, Masculinity is a social archetype to which no man or woman need conform, regardless of biological factors.) A sampling of some of these stereotypically Masculine behaviours witnessed in militarism and the arms race are now provided.

(a) Perhaps the most fundamental pressure upon men in Patriarchy is the need to establish dominance. To the power-driven, "every situation is perceived as hierarchical; occupying any position other than the pinnacle of the imagined hierarchy creates great anxiety".<sup>3</sup> Security has therefore been identified with ever more power and control,<sup>4</sup> as exemplified by the ironic phrase 'Peace through Strength'. This accounts for why foreign policy and foreign 'aid' is directed in a manner that makes other countries dependent and, consequently, powerless.

Domination, as a means of control, tends to supplant security or peace as the policy objective. While not to single out the United States, it had the opportunity to end the arms race

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<sup>1</sup> Penny Strange, 1989, "It'll Make a Man of You: A Feminist View of the Arms Race", in Russell, ed., *above* pp. 140-126.

<sup>2</sup> This need to dominate appears to be linked to the sex drive. Again, I do not take a position on whether the origins of dominance relationships and territoriality in Patriarchal society can be traced back to the sex drive, as evidenced in some other mammals. I am simply suggesting that this proposition is taboo, and for that very reason should be looked at carefully, because intellectual taboos tend to support power relations in society.

<sup>3</sup> Charlene Spretnak, 1989, "Naming the Cultural Forces that Push Us Toward War", in Russell, ed., *above* (NY: Pergamon Press) pp. 53-62, at p. 54.

<sup>4</sup> Starhawk, 1990, "Bending the Energy: Spirituality, Politics and Culture", in Christopher Plant & Judith Plant, eds., 1991, *Turtle Talk: Voices for a Sustainable Future* (Lillooet, BC: New Society) pp. 32-39 at p. 34.

while it possessed a monopoly of nuclear weapons from 1945-1949, and an overwhelming superiority through the mid-1960s.<sup>1</sup> It was incumbent upon the most powerful military nation on earth to either lead by example or take initiative in preventing an arms race. Instead, it took many unilateral actions which increased the size and speed of the arms race; it refused to agree to a Comprehensive Test Ban; it refused the treaty in 1963 urged by Khrushchev; it refused to agree in 1969 to a ban on testing of MIRVed missiles, and it refused a mutual comprehensive freeze and moratorium on testing.<sup>2</sup>

(b) There is a need for an adversary in order to display dominance. National rivalry is parallel to Masculine rivalry. As Penny Strange explains, "feeling a member of a superior group gives a sense of power; it is what men get from their treatment of women, and what nations get from having an enemy".<sup>3</sup> Both proving manhood and proving nationhood are based on winning power. Thus, the rise of the nation state is historically associated with a large permanent body of professionals, equipped with the latest technology - the military.<sup>4</sup>

Because a sense of security is gained through a display of superior strength (rather than through the reflexive process of nourishing better relations and communication), Patriarchal values inevitably lead to an arms race. If there is always an enemy 'out there', one has to be ever stronger. Strength, accompanied by posturing and displaying symbols of power, in turn puts others under threat, encourages pre-emptive strikes or subversion, and increases the perceived need for a military build up.

(c) Along with creating alliances against common enemies, another means of achieving dominance is through creating dependency. 'Protection', as offered by alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact, reinforces relationships of dominance and co-dependency among allies. Weaker member nations are continually pressured into buying newer weapons systems from the more powerful supplier nations, to 'pull their own weight'.

Protectionism is also parallel to that form of protection which pimps offer prostitutes. Carol Cohn describes an article by a retired United States Air Force General, entitled 'Nuclear Virginity', which discusses New Zealand's refusal to allow nuclear-armed or nuclear-powered warships into its ports:

He is contemptuous of the woman's protestation that she wants to remain pure, innocent of nuclear weapons; her moral reluctance is a quaint and ridiculous throw-back. But beyond contempt, he also feels

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<sup>1</sup> Patricia Ellsberg and Elissa Melamed, 1989, "Seeing Through the Emperor's New Clothes: Two Women Look at the Nuclear Issue", in Russell, ed., *above* pp. 84-92 at p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Ellsberg and Melamed, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 90

<sup>3</sup> Strange, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 117.

<sup>4</sup> Strange, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 117.

outraged - after all, this is a woman we have *paid* for, who *still* will not come across. He suggests that we withdraw our goods and services - and then we will see just how long she tries to hold onto her virtue.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, as she says, "the patriarchal bargain could not be laid out more clearly".<sup>2</sup>

(d) Establishing and displaying dominance requires perceiving the Other as separate and lesser, or even as non-human. As Strange explains, the 'Masculine' way of securing peace is by building barriers to keep people out or isolate them. These are referred to as 'dissociative' peace strategies.<sup>3</sup> Rather than using power to develop systems of mutual support and cooperation, the impulse is to brandish weapons. In the recent United States/Iraq war, for example, it was apparently easier for President Bush to give the order to attack - which could literally have led to the end of the world - than to communicate face-to-face with Iraq's Saddam Hussein. The psychological strategies appeared to be designed not to improve communication and defuse the crisis, but to back Hussein into a corner. In the end, such a strategy may have been necessary, but we will never know. What we *do* know is that the path chosen cost over 100 thousand civilian lives and did not disempower Hussein.

Dissociative peace strategies reinforce the 'them v. us' mentality inherent in Patriarchal cosmology. This mentality is then exploited by the military to 'dehumanize' enemies, making it easier for soldiers to kill them. This has traditionally been achieved by linking the enemy with the Other - women and nature. For example, war propaganda has often portrayed enemies as rats or other animals or as being 'closer to nature'; more sensual and less rational, or less in the image of Rational Man.

There is a parallel tendency, and often a deliberate policy, to humiliate the enemy by figuratively castrating or 'making a woman of him'.<sup>4</sup> The problem is, having been humiliated, so-called 'losers' (like some Germans, Israelis, Palestinians and some day perhaps Iraqis) can become obsessed with vindicating their national 'dignity' (read Masculinity). This is played out through aggression.

(e) The pathological distortion of sex itself in its association with conquest and violence is an integral part of dominance relationships. Just as virility is associated with prowess in battle, sexuality is associated with violence. (This is reinforced by movies and television which often

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<sup>1</sup> Carol Cohn, 1989, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals" in Russell, ed., *above* pp. 127-159 at p. 137 citing USAF Retired General T. E. Milton, 1985, "Nuclear Virginity" Air Force Magazine, Vol. 68 (5) at p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Cohn, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 137.

<sup>3</sup> Strange, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> For example, after his first act of war against North Vietnam, U.S. President Johnson reputedly said "I didn't just screw Ho Chi Minh. I cut his pecker off".

seem to be sex fantasies of, for and by men.) Violence is therefore linked, to varying extents, with the Masculine identity: "subjugating someone or something becomes the necessary proof of manhood, and the oppression of women perpetuates this false virility".<sup>1</sup> This association of sex and conquest partly explains why it has often been considered the prerogative of conquering soldiers to rape. But there are also rewards for the old males back home, who are pushing the buttons.

Patriarchal civilization may be viewed as a network of defense measures to alleviate the fundamental insecurities of the mature male....Paradoxical as it may sound, one of the most effective of men's defense measures has always been war. War offers an excellent excuse for older males to bind the younger one's family to their service, and not incidentally, to destroy a good many of them in the process.<sup>2</sup>

Contrary to the conventional wisdom, violence is not significantly a product of class or poverty (but perhaps the reverse), as the recent exposure of domestic violence and sexual abuse (of children and women) has shown.<sup>3</sup> Rather, crimes of violence among the upper classes are often expressed differently. The criminologist, Diana Russell, argues that while "physically coercive tactics are the chief tools of conquest available to lower class men" to prove their manhood, upper class men can assert their Masculinity through economic and political conquest.<sup>4</sup> For example, the distribution of free cigarettes with very high nicotine content to children,<sup>5</sup> or free breast milk formula for mothers in Third World countries, in order to get them addicted, is an indirect form of violence as it leads to death. The upper class may not use violence directly, but historically they have had a military at their disposal, stocked with an over-representation of (expendable) disadvantaged and racial minorities.

(f) Another pressure on men is to prove dominance by winning. Militarism (and Masculinity) seems to lead to a drive to win *at any cost*. If a U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defence could say the following - then what can we expect of our 'enemies'?

The NATO doctrine is that we will fight with conventional weapons until we are losing, then we will fight with tactical nuclear weapons until we are losing, and then we will blow up the world.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Strange, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Barbara G. Walker, 1985, *The Crone: Woman of Age, Wisdom, and Power* (S.F.: Harper and Row) at p. 171-2.

<sup>3</sup> It has been estimated that one in three women have been sexually abused and one in five reports this to the police. Accurate figures are impossible to obtain, however. Dr. Patricia Easta, 1992, *Sexual Assault Survey* (Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology).

<sup>4</sup> Russell, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 69.

<sup>5</sup> Russell, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 68.

<sup>6</sup> Former Deputy Secretary of Defense, Morton Halperin, quoted in Strange, 1989, *above* at p. 117.

The connection between winning and Masculinity leads to totally irrational policy decisions. For example, research by John Pilger showed that the U.S. military establishment had been providing Pol Pot weapons and political support even though they did not want him in power.<sup>1</sup> The only conceivable reason, as far as Pilger could ascertain, was that Generals high up in the state Department were still fighting the Vietnam War. Having been once humiliated by North Vietnam, they were compelled to fight them regardless of the means or consequences.

Patriarchal society glorifies winners: the top ranked militarists in the United States/Iraq war were subsequently tipped as candidates for the White house. In contrast, "losers are buried or made to beg for crumbs" from the Veterans Administration.<sup>2</sup> I would hypothesize that one of the reasons that Vietnam veterans were treated badly was not so much because people disapproved of the war, but because the soldiers were seen as 'losers'.

(g) Another aspect of Masculine identity reflected in militarism is the pressure on men to suppress their emotions. Men, especially military men, are trained to be detached or deny their feelings. To 'be a man' is to be tough and deny pain - to be the opposite of the Feminine stereotype. The obsession with 'objectivity' is, in part, another manifestation of the need to distance oneself from the Feminine. However, the denial of one's 'softer' emotions can lead to extreme imbalance, as in the documenting of wartime atrocities by their perpetrators in Japan and Germany during WWII. Objectivity may be a worthy, if impossible, aim in itself. In a Patriarchal context, however, absurd results often attend the claim of objectivity.

Strategic military theory creates the illusion of being dispassionate or 'objective' because it is based on abstract thinking. Strategic theory was developed largely by people trained in mathematics and economics, who were mainly concerned about how the theory held together according to its own internal logic.<sup>3</sup> Real world considerations that did not fit within the language and theory of strategic analysis - such as human well being - were simply dismissed as unprofessional or irrelevant (as they still are). Thus the male military enclave is immune from ecological or feminist realities.

(h) The obsession with winning, combined with suppressing feeling (and perhaps men's lack of experience in cleaning up after themselves) helps to explain the tendency for militarists to treat war as a game. The language of military experts and strategists reflects the rarefied, detached thinking that characterizes the arms race. It concerns the impact of actions and decisions on technical systems rather than upon human beings. The language puts the

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<sup>1</sup> Weapons from France, England, the U.S. and Sweden were sent to Pol Pot via Singapore to a warehouse in Thailand purchased by the United Nations through a humanitarian fund and leased by the U.S. (Source: T.V. documentary by World Vision on Australian Public Television, March, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> Spretnak, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> Cohn, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 150.

militarists in the position of the users - not the victims - of nuclear weapons.<sup>1</sup> Yet, paradoxically, there is nothing actually objective about military language, as Cohn (who studied in a defence academy) points out: take for example, 'soft lay downs', 'penetration aids', 'protracted versus spasm attacks', and 'releasing our megatonnage in one orgasmic whump'. Revealingly, Cohn tells us, there is not even a word for 'peace' in strategic circles.

As close as one can come is "strategic stability," a term that refers to a balance of numbers and types of weapons systems - not the political, social, economic, and psychological conditions implied by the word "peace".<sup>2</sup>

Likewise, success in the big war game tends to be measured by who has more of what weapons, rather than the impact on society. As we later see, in Planning the concern of analysts is on balancing losses against gains. Similarly, this preoccupation with keeping score, tallies, and records, means that defence experts develop complex theories for nuclear arms 'control' rather than for ending the arms race.

(i) Our final Masculine behaviour pattern found in militarism is self-destructiveness. We have seen that Masculinity is defined by powerfulness and distancing from traits associated with Femininity. This imbalance, or striving to be more 'Manly' (read God-like) leads to polarized behaviour that is literally self-destructive.

The blueprint for masculinity is a blueprint for self-destruction. It is a process so deeply embedded in the male consciousness, however, that awareness of its course and its end has been lost. The masculine imperative, the pressure and compulsion to perform, to prove himself, to dominate, to live up to the "masculine ideal" - in short, to "be a man" - supersedes the instinct to survive.<sup>3</sup>

The Masculinist culture seems to devalue life-giving activities and celebrate life-taking.<sup>4</sup> Death defying or risk taking is glorified in movies, books, art, and pop music. It has been speculated that Man's preoccupation with death may relate to the fact that He is separated from the other end of the life cycle:

Not feeling intrinsically involved in the processes of birthing and nurturing, nor strongly predisposed toward empathetic communion, men may have turned their attention, for many eras, toward the other aspect of the cycle, death. Certainly much of men's art and literature

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<sup>1</sup> Cohn, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> Cohn, 1989, in Russell, ed., *above* at p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> Herb Goldberg, 1987, *The Inner Male: Overcoming Roadblocks to Intimacy* (Ontario: New American Library) at p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ynestra King, 1983, "Toward an Ecological Feminism and A Feminist Ecology", in Joan Rothschild, ed., *Machina Ex Dea: Feminist Perspectives on Technology* (NY: Pergamon) at p. 123.

has shown an obsession with this theme, and the male-orchestrated global arms race is suicide on a grand scale.<sup>1</sup>

I have suggested that the behaviour of world leaders, in both personality and strategy, reflects all-too-familiar patterns: building barriers and distancing oneself from the enemy, denying the worth or humanity of the Other, attempting to establish dominance and create dependency, and winning at all costs. These are 'stereotypically' Masculine forms of conflict resolution. *Preventing* war by promoting world peace, rather than arms sales, subversion, and belligerence, has seldom been tried at the national level - as evidenced by the relative expenditures on militarism and peace making. Perhaps this is partly because the armed forces really exist as an icon: they "represent and defend the masculine ethic", rather than life.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Charlene Spretnak, 1989, "Toward an Ecofeminist Spirituality", in Plant, ed., 1989, *above* pp. 127-132 at p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> Judy Wajcman, 1991, *Feminism Confronts Technology* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin) at p. 146.



## CHAPTER 12: STRATEGIES FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Having looked at some of the shortcomings of Manstream theory, we now turn to problems of Manstream strategy. Manstream radical environmentalism and ecofeminism find much common ground with regard to the sort of societies they would like to create. However, ecofeminism differs from Manstream theory when it comes to strategy, or how to get there. Although both would concur that it is necessary to work on all levels for social change and that there is no *one* correct way, underneath the many tactical approaches of Manstream activists there is a similar pattern. Their strategies are generally attempts to (a) change people's behaviour (b) through changing values or world views (c) by appealing to their intellect or 'rationality'.

I believe one can discern two main orientations toward strategy among activists that correspond with those I distinguished among green theorists.<sup>1</sup> First are the Leftists, who invest their energy in pushing for systemic change over, say, personal transformation. Second are the Liberalists, whose primary focus is on changing individuals' values and perceptions, rather than changing institutions and social structures.

I exclude the far left or Marxist position here, except to say that any stance that relies on capturing state power - which involves using violence at some stage - is inconsistent with green thinking altogether. This is because non-violence (and non-disturbance of the environment) is a central tenet of green philosophy. This is both on grounds of moral principle and for practical reasons. Any violence harms the Earth as well as its inhabitants, so a strategy that could lead to violence is counterproductive in the extreme. (Greens cannot afford to throw the baby out with the bath water.) Thus, while Marxism contributes to green analysis, it is not very relevant to green strategy.

The appeal to reason to change people's behaviour is found across the traditional political spectrum. (Non-Marxist) Leftist green activists (those emphasizing systemic change) implicitly assume that Man is by nature rational and therefore motivated by self-interest; hence He will respond to rational arguments to think ecologically, end war, and create a just society. The problem to them is to make people see where their true interests lay.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is based on an affiliation with the peace, social justice, and environment movement for over two decades and on two continents.

<sup>2</sup> For example, see Joanna Macy, 1989, "Awakening to the Ecological Self", in Plant, ed., 1989, *above* pp. 201- 11 at p. 210. Macy, a deep ecologist, argues that the solution is to be "more enlightened about what one's self-interest is".

Liberalist green activists (those emphasizing individual change) implicitly assume that if we understand ecological synergy and appreciate our Oneness with nature, we will act more rationally. For example, deep ecologists, in trying to make people see that to harm nature and others is to harm themselves, are ultimately relying on *reason* to persuade people to become deep ecologists and act rationally. Thus both Liberalist and Leftist approaches to strategy assume they can motivate behavioural change through intellectual means such as education.

This chapter explores why these traditional approaches have not served to bring about social change. I suggest that there is a missing link that is provided by an ecofeminist analysis. Namely, Manstream greens have banked on 'education' in the broad sense, but have generally regarded gender irrelevant to that education process. Further, they have banked on motivating people to stop their collectively irrational behaviour through reason, generally regarding non-rational, or emotional needs as a non-issue. Their strategies rely upon the same old Masculine Model of Man. An analysis and strategy based on denial cannot be sufficient. It is a case of the one-dimensional leading the blind.

The ecofeminist paradigm suggests that a reflexive, deconstruction process must come first: we must look directly at the blind spots, the most powerful of which (at present) is arguably gender-blindness and androcentrism. Or as put more dramatically by Sharon Doubiago:

Because of sexism, because of the psychotic avoidance of the issue at all costs, ecologists have failed to grasp the fact that at the core of our suicidal mission is the psychological issue of gender, the oldest war, the war of the sexes.<sup>1</sup>

I suggested earlier that people strive for and abuse power because, in Western Patriarchal society, emotional needs are repressed and denied, as are other things that have been associated with the feminine. Consequently, there has been a tendency to compensate *indirectly* for what is wanting through a non-rational drive for power and control. That is, the denial of *emotional* needs that have been repressed in our androcentric culture has contributed to displacement: an obsession with physical gratification and power (as a means of obtaining emotional gratification) which leads on a social level to hyper-competition, conflict and over-consumption.

In this chapter, we again use the case of militarism to examine the usefulness of the strategy that results from the Manstream (androcentric) analysis: the appeal to reason. (A parallel discussion would apply to, say, forest clear felling). The predominant Manstream approach to countering militarism is winning over public opinion through reason (by gaining media attention, lobbying politicians, letterboxing, or winning office and so on) is of little avail. By ignoring the personal and the non-rational, greens are indirectly supporting the status quo. This

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<sup>1</sup> Sharon Doubiago, 1989, "Mama Coyote Talks to the Boys", in Plant, ed., *above* pp. 40-44, at p. 43.

is not of course, to argue against the use of reason. Rather, I am saying that the tendency to assume that relying on the rationality of decision-making behaviour on the part of voters, administrators, politicians, or generals will only work if decision-makers' *motives* are rational. And this is a one-dimensional interpretation of human behaviour based on androcentrism.

### Manstream activist orientations

How do both ends of the spectrum of Manstream strategic orientations rely on reason to persuade people to behave rationally? Let us take a snapshot of the two positions regarding the causes of militarism and the types of solutions that stem from them. The implicit position of many Liberalist greens and peace workers is that the *narrow self* is "the cause of war and ecological destruction".<sup>1</sup> This is because an analysis that takes human-centred perception as the operative issue begins with the conclusion that narrow identification or nationalism underlies world conflict, which leads to 'them versus us' thinking and fear of others, and in turn, to defensive/aggressive behaviour - and hence to militarism. If the problem is human identification, the solution is to expand our sense of interrelatedness and see ourselves as one world. This perspective has found expression in, for example, the 'deep ecology', the 'One World or None', and the 'Beyond War' movements, and is discussed later. Of course, fear of Other or 'them versus us' thinking is indeed a symptom that needs direct attention.

This may not be a simple matter of values, however. It may have biological origins or may even be determined by brain functions.<sup>2</sup> Further, identification among people (such as religious groups), has not prevented factionalization. My only point is that, as a practical matter, the selection of this as the *fundamental* issue is not very useful. 'Them versus us' thinking may be better understood - not as narrow identification - but in terms of the false dualisms that have been used by powerful interests to divide and rule: such as heathen/believer, capitalist/communist, male/female, skilled/unskilled, white/black.<sup>3</sup> These divisions and their manipulation are made plausible and encoded by 'hierarchical dualism', as explained earlier.

Leftist greens and peace workers, on the other hand, generally identify capitalism or imperialism as the force behind militarism.<sup>4</sup> Capitalism is, of course, integral to military

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<sup>1</sup> Warwick Fox, 1990, *Towards a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism* (MA: Shambala).

<sup>2</sup> See Carl Sagan, 1977, *The Dragons of Eden: Speculations on the Evolution of Human Intelligence* (N.Y.: Random House).

<sup>3</sup> See Cynthia Enloe, 1989, *Bananas, Beaches & Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press), who illustrates this with specific cases.

<sup>4</sup> Militarism in the Third World is seen as a part of a global capitalist expansion. Thus, the 'cold war' against socialism has moved from the North to the South, but it serves the same ends. The explanation for militarism in

adventurism and the arms race. But this analysis does not go deep enough. The main value of Leftist green critiques of capitalism resides in its description of the 'mechanics' of militarism. Like sports commentators (many of whom are former players), they know the rules of the game and can follow the action, but they cannot really change the outcome. Thus Leftists hope the system will change through means that history has proven futile - pointing out the insanity and injustice of war. This approach - premised as it is on the ability of reason to triumph - is losing ground everywhere against the more 'creative' approach of the capitalist press, the intoxicants of the market bazaar, and the glitz of show biz. The paradox of such an approach is that, in an unjust system, the 'rational' will want to align themselves with the winners. (The apparent popularity of Hitler before he started losing is an unfortunate case in point.)

### The appeal to reason

I suggested that both (non-Marxist) Leftist and Liberalist greens rely upon people acting differently once they realize that militarism, whether due to human-centredness or capitalist-engendered factors, is not rational. Ultimately, they bank upon the majority recognizing that the capitalist system is bad for them, and hence changing the system through the market, the ballot box or the streets.

But, if people were persuaded by reason alone, why would Militarism exist in the first place? The appeal to reason might work if warfare were a 'rational' means of acquiring resources and security. However, the fundamental irrationality of the arms race and modern warfare suggests this is not an adequate explanation. Militarism is not 'substantively' rational as it threatens all life on earth. It is not 'procedurally' rational as warfare cannot achieve security, whether material, ideological, or territorial. Alternatively, if militarism were indeed 'rational', then the *ends* of military action would necessarily be power for the sake of power, rather than for the sake of resolving the problems cited as reasons for military exploits.

Militarism, I suggest, cannot be adequately understood outside the 'non-rational' dimension. Further, reasoned argument is also inadequate to make militarists act rationally and abandon power-based modes of behaviour. Reason (alone) is also inadequate to motivate the general public to take action to stop military mischief. Instead, I suggest that Masculine identification

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the Third World is considered to be largely the arm of Western capitalist interests, often enforcing policies within host countries that are against those countries' own environments and peoples on behalf of foreign interests. (The poor are easily recruited for this task due to desperation and fear of starvation, lack of enough political awareness to know where their real interests lie, and class divisions in society which predominate over national solidarity.) Violence is not, therefore, always reprehensible to the left. In fact, armed struggle against capitalist interests is often portrayed as heroic.

and emotional needs are more central factors to focus upon in bringing about change (than anthropocentrism or capitalism), as this approach works to expose more fundamental bases for power seeking - sex and gender.

The appeal to reason can be directed in two ways: toward decision makers ('top down' approach), or average citizens (a populist or 'bottom up' approach). We begin by looking at the assumption that rational arguments will change militarist policies and behaviour. The 'rationality' of world leaders as manifested in military policy suggests that rational arguments, such as the costs of war to their nations, is not effective in persuading decision makers to behave more rationally. Then we look at the strategy of persuading people to adopt a more mystical or spiritual orientation to nature as a means to bring about rational behaviour. The implicit assumption here is that the aggregate public can be persuaded to change their way of thinking and then, in turn, persuade world leaders to do so through electoral, rational or spiritual means. I do not dispute the potential of these approaches to work some day (with a lot of luck), but I suggest that they cannot do so within a time frame that can save the environment. I argue that only an approach that addresses personal emotional needs and motivations can hope to change behaviour quickly enough.

### **Influencing leaders**

If the causes of militarism were simply narrow, human-centred, but rational self-interest, then militarism would bear some rational - if misguided - relationship to defence, or economic or other human benefit. But it does not. Leaders already know that militarist policy does not make economic sense. Through the ages, it has been recognized that armaments are extremely wasteful and inflationary.<sup>1</sup> The rise in military expenditures vastly exceeds the rise of economic activity needed to support it.<sup>2</sup> In the 1980s, United States military expenditures per capita were more than eleven times those immediately preceding WWII (adjusted for inflation), or over 6.5 percent of GNP, as opposed to one percent before the war.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As the Russian Czar reputedly said in 1898: "Since the financial means required for armaments are constantly rising, capital and labour are misdirected from their true uses and are devoured unproductively. Millions are spent on more advanced weapons which are quickly rendered obsolete by new advances in science. The acceleration in armaments spending therefore corresponds less and less to the purpose allotted to them by the respective governments". (Source: Rudolf Steiner, 1905, "War, Peace and the Science of the Spirit" ).

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the impacts of militarism from a Christian perspective, see Zelle W. Andrews, 1985, *War in Slow Motion: The Economic and Social Impact of Militarism. A Guide to Study and Action* (TX: The Pilgrim Press).

<sup>3</sup> Ruth Leger Sivard, 1987, *World Military and Social Expenditures 1987-88: An Annual Report on World Priorities* (Washington DC.: World Priorities).

It is common knowledge that weapons create inflation because, unlike most other products, once built, they do not generate further economic activity.<sup>1</sup> Bombs are not used twice, and when they are not used, they are stockpiled. In wartime, unused bombs have often been dumped from planes to avoid dangerous landings on return, which is highly inflationary (as well as ecologically disastrous). The costs of military waste, even in peace time, is beyond reckoning. The costs of cleaning up the activities of one arms merchant, for example (who was licensed to sell weapons from the U.S. State Department and trafficked in chemical wastes) cost the taxpayers tens of millions of dollars to clean up its chemical warehouses.<sup>2</sup>

Militarists may not worry about the economics of military policies, but government leaders who seek to retain power certainly should. Since World War II, many Western governments have become the marketing arm of private weapons dealers, ostensibly on economic grounds. However, this 'military Keynesianism' (stimulating the economy with government investment in arms production) has not led to rational ends. 'Developed' countries spend on average 5.4% of the GNP in military spending in comparison with 0.3% aid to developing countries, and poorer countries spend 3 times as much on arms as needed to provide health care, clean water, and sanitation.<sup>3</sup> Military spending has also taken a great toll on the relative power of nations; Japan's economic advance has often been widely attributed partly to its low military expenditure.

From 1960-80 Japan spent 2% of government research and development funds on the military; her growth rate in manufacturing was 9%. From 1960-80 the USA spent 60% of government research and development funds on the military; her growth rate in manufacturing was 2.5%.<sup>4</sup>

Government involvement in arms sales has not been conducted in a rational manner either. In Iran, for example, billions in United States arms passed to the Ayatollah's regime when it took over. When \$12 billion worth of weapons were cancelled by the Ayatollah, the U.S. taxpayer had to compensate the private arms suppliers to the tune of several hundred million. Yet the United States later sold weapons both to the Afghans, who in turn sold them to Iran via Israel,<sup>5</sup> while supplying Iraq with weapons to fight Iran (an absurdity brought to light in the 'Iran-Contra' Scandal).

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<sup>1</sup> For discussion of how the military is bad for business, see Harold Willens, 1984, *The Trimtab Factor: How Business Executives can Help Solve the Nuclear Weapons Crisis* (NY: William Morrow & Co.).

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Investigative Reporting and Bill Moyers, 1990, *Global Dumping Ground: The International Traffic in Hazardous Wastes* (Cabin John, MD: Seven Locks Press) at p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Frank Barnaby, ed., 1988, *The Gaia Peace Atlas* (NY: Doubleday) at p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> National Women's Consultative Council, 1991, *A Question of Balance* (Report to the Hon. Wendy Fatin, M.P.) Appendix D p. 105.

<sup>5</sup> *The Australian*, 21 September 1987.

This is not rational planning and decision making to achieve security in any sense. Apart from a handful of corrupt arms merchants and their puppets, everybody loses financially. Nonetheless, some assume that warfare is rational in spite of its costs, even if perhaps immoral, because it is supposedly believed by perpetrators to be a means to acquire territory and resources. However, the 1991 war with Iraq cost United States taxpayers not only countless billions but also an incomprehensible loss of non-renewable resources. Eight hundred oil wells burned for months in the aftermath of the war. The unwillingness to negotiate before that war also suggests that militarists and leaders do not worry too much about the rationality of warfare or the human and financial costs and resources jeopardized by war.

Then there is the matter of the rationality of nuclear arms themselves, the climax of Masculinist science. Diana Russell argues that nuclear weapons are entirely a product of the male mind or, at least, a cult of Masculinity.<sup>1</sup> Nuclear weapons are 'intrinsic irrationality'. Like all weaponry they are wasteful and inflationary, but nuclear arms also offer no defence, and their possession is arguably illegal. First, while many still think of the weapons industry as somehow serving the national defence, there is no defence against a nuclear attack by others or even by ourselves. For example, a pre-emptive strike by the United States using star wars technology (assuming it could work and not be retaliated) could destroy the global eco-system beyond repair. Nuclear warfare is omnicidal, not just suicidal, as it would eliminate most life on earth. Many mainstream military and civilian experts recognize that nuclear bombs are also *militarily* useless.<sup>2</sup> Generals for Peace and Disarmament, a group of former NATO generals and admirals, was formed in 1981 because they also felt that the concept of a limited nuclear war or a 'star war' defence is irrational.<sup>3</sup>

Second, the use of nuclear weapons is illegal, under the UN Charter, the 1907 Hague Convention, and the Geneva Protocols of 1977.<sup>4</sup> Further, it has been argued that even *possession* of nuclear weapons is illegal under the 1950 Nuremberg Principles.<sup>5</sup> The only

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<sup>1</sup> Diana E. H. Russell, 1989, "Sexism, Violence, and the Nuclear Mentality", in Diana Russell, ed., *above* pp. 63-73 at p. 67. See also Nancy Shelley, 1983, "Women and the Prevention of Nuclear War", in Michael Denborough, ed., *Australia and Nuclear War* (Canberra: Croom Helm) pp. 228-251.

<sup>2</sup> One such person is Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defence under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. In 1983, McNamara said: "I know of no plan which gives reasonable assurance that nuclear weapons can be used beneficially in NATO's defense". See Robert S. McNamara, 1983, "The Military Role of Nuclear Weapons: Perceptions and Misperceptions" *Foreign Affairs* 62 pp. 59-80.

<sup>3</sup> General Gert Bastian, et al., Dec. 1984, *Generals for Peace and Disarmament: A Challenge to US/NATO Strategy* (NY: Universe Books).

<sup>4</sup> Professionals for Peace, 1987, Newsletter 2 (3) September, and Barnaby, ed., *above* p. 69-70.

<sup>5</sup> "Principle VI states that 'planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances' is a crime against peace, punishable in international law." Barnaby, eds., 1988, *above* at p. 70.

possible legal justification for having nuclear weapons, then, is that they will not be used; they are kept as a 'deterrent' only. As shown below, however, deterrence is a false concept, because deterrence has, in fact, served as a form of violence or aggression, rather than defence.

In short, nuclear arms cannot defend us and are wasteful, inflationary, illegal and ecocidal. They are by definition substantively irrational, because they threaten life itself and therefore everyone's self-interest. Government and military leaders should realize this, yet they resist *alternative* means of acquiring security, access to resources and territory, or whatever ends militarism is supposed to serve. Virtually nothing is spent on peace making activity, or on eliminating the causes of war.<sup>1</sup> Let us now consider the stated or official reasons traditionally given for the necessity for possessing nuclear arms: 'deterrence' and 'containment' of anti-capitalist ideologies. It can be shown that these stated aims are not served by a militarist policy. These concepts are self-contradictory rationalizations for the traditional Masculine form of conflict resolution - establishing dominance - which has led to organized crime on a world scale (more commonly called 'the arms race').

#### The 'rationale' for the arms race

Let us begin with nuclear 'deterrence'. The term is 'doublespeak' because it implies self-defence. It is, in fact, a euphemism for a deadly form of aggression: *psychological warfare*. To most people, deterrence' evokes the idea of (a) a willingness to make a *retaliatory* strike (b) in response to a nuclear attack (c) on one's own country. From the beginning, nuclear deterrence meant threatening a nuclear first strike, not retaliation.<sup>2</sup> Using the bomb to 'deter' potential Soviet aggression was in fact the United State's policy as early as 1945, four years before the Soviets had a bomb, and even longer before they were expected to. Later, in the 1980s, the United States refused to say that it would not strike first, despite the Soviets' promise not to do so - hardly consistent with the alleged aim of deterrence.

Deterrence was never limited to a response to a nuclear attack, but rather was to be used in retaliation for a Soviet encroachment using conventional weapons in Western Europe, or to prevent indigenous communist movements elsewhere. It was not, therefore, 'self-defence'. Deterrence, was a strategy - not to prevent the other side from using nuclear weapons - but to prevent them from hitting back on United States soil in case of war.<sup>3</sup> This is apparently what Ronald Reagan had in mind in 1981, when he said that the United States could contain a

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the U.S. spends the equivalent of less than one percent of its military budget on peace making.

<sup>2</sup> See Bernard Brodie, ed., 1946, *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order* (N.Y.: Harcourt Brace).

<sup>3</sup> The history of nuclear policy is set out in Gwyn Prins, ed., 1983, *Defended to Death: A Study of the Nuclear Arms Race from the Cambridge University Disarmament Seminar* (Harmondsworth: Penguin).



nuclear war outside its territory. The cold war worked so well that countries such as Germany, England, Holland and Australia were willing to be, in effect, nuclear targets or shields for the United States. The 'nuclear umbrella' was not only an ingenious protection racket, it was a metaphor which masked a policy based on dominance (not the personal care an umbrella implies). As Henry Kissinger said in 1979, the umbrella was a myth, for neither the U.S. nor the U.S.S.R. would risk their own cities to defend foreign territories.<sup>1</sup>

Since World War II (at least) deterrence has really been a code word for aggressive containment of socialist ideology.<sup>2</sup> We will return to the question of whether the arms race has in fact been rationally directed towards this end, or whether, instead, containment has been a euphemism for dominance. But first, even assuming that deterrence was actually a 'defence' strategy, deterrence ceased to be United States policy in the 1980s. The new 'counterforce' capability meant a nuclear strike against the opponent's military forces and weapons, instead of its citizenry, *wastheoretically* possible through the use of more sophisticated weapons. This led to the idea that nuclear wars were winnable and to the strategy of 'limited nuclear war'.<sup>3</sup> The concept of 'limited nuclear war' meant striking military targets with tactical (local) nuclear weapons somewhere, while holding in reserve the main strategic force to deter the enemy from responding with a general nuclear attack against the United States.<sup>4</sup> If taken at face value, then, deterrence theory was also, it would seem, totally irrational: it meant having more weapons than were needed to destroy the entire planet at least twelve times over, and it meant frightening enemies into building up more arms. This is hardly a human-centred policy; it is, however, very 'macho'.

Nonetheless, proponents of deterrence argue that it is a 'necessary evil' which has prevented war. In fact, however, deterrence never prevented conventional wars, it increased the risks of nuclear war and terrorism, and it legitimated nuclear proliferation. While it has been argued that there has not been a major war since 1945, there have been in fact twice as many wars in the 40 years since World War II than in the 40 years before the war, and there were something like 237 military conflicts from 1900 to 1985.<sup>5</sup> Also, 20 million have died in

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<sup>1</sup> Barnaby, ed., 1988, *above* at p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> For a critique of deterrence on other grounds, see Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, 1985, *Psychology and Deterrence* (MD: Johns Hopkins University Press). The case for deterrence is presented in George H. Quester, 1986, *The Future of Nuclear Deterrence* (MA: Lexington Books).

<sup>3</sup> Jonathon Green, 1986, *The A-Z of Nuclear Jargon* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul).

<sup>4</sup> See Gwyn Prins, ed., 1983, *above* pp. 102-118.

<sup>5</sup> Counts of the number of wars vary somewhat. For a detailed account of wars since 1945, see Tom Hartman, 1984, *World Atlas of Military Conflict 1945-1984* (London: Leo Cooper & Secker & Warburg).

wars since World War II, most of whom were women and children.<sup>1</sup> So when it is said that deterrence 'works', it only means there has not been a *nuclear* war on *Western* soil (yet), though there have been several close calls.<sup>2</sup>

Also, covert operations have increased many fold since 1945, partly because militarists realized that open warfare could lead to nuclear war. These operations included para-military operations, political assassinations and domestic provocateurism. Early on, this was mostly 'licensed terrorism', or terrorism by the superpowers. But terrorism has increased among 'unlicensed' terrorists, such as small Arab nations, that cannot match the First World in conventional warfare.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, nuclear terrorism has also appeared among smaller nations. A 'terrorist' group with one atomic bomb could blackmail political concessions from an adversary nation, and there have been many such threats.<sup>4</sup>

Deterrence, by legitimizing the possession of nuclear weapons, has also worked to legitimize nuclear technology. This technology transfer has meant nuclear proliferation through reactor exports. It is not hard to build a bomb when you have nuclear technology. In 1979, a student in the U.S. demonstrated how to build one, using public library sources. Many Third World countries now operate nuclear power plants, which means they also have the necessary fuel material.<sup>5</sup> It has been noted that *if* deterrence works, every country should have the bomb. If so, the fact that up to 50 countries either have the bomb or the capacity to develop one should come as a relief to those who believe in deterrence.

But if nuclear deterrence is a tool of foreign policy, then is it a *legitimate* tool? Patriarchal societies have been authoritarian in their external affairs, using threats and punishment to get their way (behaviour we would disapprove of in children). All American Presidents from Roosevelt to Bush, with the possible exception of President Ford, have actually threatened to

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<sup>1</sup> Barnaby, eds., 1988, *above* p. 99. In the 1982 Lebanese war, for example, about 90 percent of victims were civilians, mostly women and children (at p. 98).

<sup>2</sup> On 9 November 1979, the United States was 3 minutes from nuclear launch due to a computer error. David Hackworth, 1983, "A Soldier's Report", in Michael Denborough, ed., *above* at p. 211. See John May, 1989, *The Greenpeace Book of the Nuclear Age: The Hidden History, the Human Cost* (NY: Pantheon Books) for a list of nuclear accidents.

<sup>3</sup> The bombing of the World Trade Centre on 28 February 1993 is a case in point.

<sup>4</sup> Between 1970 and mid-1981 there were 65 terrorist threats to use nuclear bombs in the US. See Patrick O'Heffernan, Amory B. Lovins, and L. Hunter Lovins, 1983, *The First Nuclear World War: A Strategy for Preventing Nuclear Wars and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons* (NY: William Morrow & Co.).

<sup>5</sup> O'Heffernan, et al., 1983, *above*.

use the bomb.<sup>1</sup> This is terrorism, not diplomacy, and increases the chances of nuclear war on Western soil.

If nuclear arms do not deter warfare and terrorism, do they then at least contain foreign fascism, communism or anti-capitalist movements? It has been widely argued that, before the economic collapse of the Soviet Union, nuclear deterrence simply meant that the U.S. and U.S.S.R. were conducting their fighting in the Third World, rather than in direct confrontation. This analysis, however, follows from the notion that the cold war is a product of inevitable East-West value differences. I would argue that military adventurism in the Third World has not primarily been a result of value differences, fear of communism or rational self-interest, but of struggle to obtain power through the control resources, territory and cheap labour. For example, if the cold war were a product of 'them versus us' thinking, and not about dominance at all costs, the West would not have continually suppressed information indicating the Russians did not have aggressive intentions, nor would it have exaggerated their military capabilities and underestimated their economic weaknesses.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, if containing threats to capitalism was the primary motive for military deterrence, why would the West sell arms and nuclear technology to China, which had nuclear weapons.<sup>3</sup> Further, the West sold arms and nuclear technology to Muslim extremists such as the rulers of Iran, and to unstable and unpopular dictatorships knowing such countries could fall to communist insurgency overnight, such as the Philippines under Marcos. Peaceful allies have been allowed to starve while corrupt dictatorships were propped up with Western weapons. This is not a rational means of containment, as leaders have long realized that starving nations are attracted to communist ideologies, and communism is bad for Western business.

I have suggested that nuclear weapons are not defensive, they do not fight anti-capitalist movements, and that they are in fact militarily useless and have no deterrent value - especially

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<sup>1</sup> Iran (1946), Korea (1950 and 1953), China (1953), Indochina (1954), Lebanon (1958), Quemoy/Matsu (1958), Laos (1961), Berlin (1961), Cuba (1962), Vietnam (1968-1972). Bush also allegedly threatened a nuclear strike in the Iraq war. See Barnaby, eds., 1988, *above* at p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> See Jonathan Steele, 1983, "We Always Exaggerate Soviet Power", in *The Washington Post* B2 (25 Dec.) and Andrew Cockburn, 1983, *The Threat: Inside the Soviet Military Machine* (NY: Random House) for a discussion of how the Soviet threat was deliberately exaggerated. In 1969, for instance, a CIA 'National Intelligence Estimate' on Soviet intentions said Russia was not seeking military superiority, nor a first strike capability, and did not have the technical or economic capability to seriously attempt to challenge US power. Had Secretary of Defence Melvin Laird not ordered CIA Director Richard Helms to delete that information from the estimate, the arms race could have been much cheaper. In fact, some of the most knowledgeable and unimpeachably patriotic sources, such as Generals for Peace, had been arguing, even before Gorbachev's arrival, that the Soviet Union was not a threat. Many argued that the CIA consistently exaggerated Soviet military spending as well.

<sup>3</sup> Morton H. Halperin and Dwight H. Perkins, 1965, *Communist China and Arms Control* (Praeger).

against guerrilla nuclear warfare. Deterrence has in fact increased the risks of nuclear war and terrorism. Nor has the arms trade been a rational tool of containment. Thus, even if we accept deterrence and containment as worthy or substantively rational goals (which I do not), these aims have not been furthered by a macho foreign policy. Yet these are the only reasons for possession of nuclear weapons other than for their actual use (which, as we have seen, is arguably illegal under international law and certainly immoral and omnicidal). By default, it appears that these goals have only served to maintain a position of military dominance, the only reward for which is eternal vigilance.

Arguments like the fact that the military causes ozone depletion, fossil fuel consumption, nuclear and toxic pollution, and so forth, simply do not impress the male enclave of CIMBIs (corporate/industrial/military/bureaucratic interests). Militarists are not moved by reason: they answer every argument with clichés about how Man is essentially aggressive and that the dominance mode, or "peace through strength", is necessary. Nor are they moved by 'high brow' ideas about expanding our sense of identification to encompass all life forms, which they would probably only see as 'effeminate'. They are hooked on fantasies of machismo and power. Such a psychology can be cured neither by rational arguments nor a green superman fantasy.

In fact, as militarism is irrational, it may be actually counter-productive to defer to proponents of militarism by 'I am right, you are wrong' arguments. Just to be right is not enough, given the state of the world. Such arguments give credence to the militarists' position, as if it were rational, but merely less enlightened. Moreover, rational arguments allow militarists to continue to deny their own emotional and non-rational motives.

In developing strategies, therefore, peace activists must realize that militarists operate on an *emotional* level. This is demonstrated by the reliance on Masculine means of dealing with conflict - through dominance, force, aggression, threats of distancing and building barriers. Thus, talk of the necessity to communicate and to meet mutual needs cannot be comprehended. Although the arms race has its own dynamic, the massive expenditure and spillover costs of militarism, juxtaposed with the minimal investment in peace, suggests the apparent inability of military leaders to even consider alternative non-force forms of conflict resolution.

But if, for the sake of argument, rational arguments were effective, then presumably they must be more logical and convincing than the militarist's rationale for warfare. The underlying justification for 'peace through strength' is that militarism is a necessary evil due to Man's 'aggressive nature'. Through this line of reasoning, it follows that competition and conquest - winning - is the only means to secure peace. If we accept an androcentric conception of Mankind, it is hard to argue with this logic. However, if we question the androcentric model itself as a social construct, the basic axiom of the militarist's logic is undermined.

## Influencing the populace

The foregoing has suggested that militarism is not a 'rational' policy and that military and civilian leaders have ample exposure to this fact. Rational arguments have been tried for decades, if not centuries, and have gained little ground. Since reason does not impress those in power, does it influence the general populace that empower these decision makers? I suggest that the chances of persuading the population at large to change their values through reason (who would then select new leaders that reflect this change of consciousness) is both naive and too slow. If 'rational' arguments directed at changing public perception about 'the enemy' were effective, relatively democratic societies would not endure the horrific costs of their leader's militarist policies. Has the Manstream not noticed that decades of peace activism, which pointed out the irrationality of militarism, did little to alter this voter behaviour? We then look at some things that a feminist analysis of militarism brings to the surface.

With regard to the efficacy of reason, it must also be remembered that the substance of an argument is often not what is most persuasive. It is partly 'how' it is said, but mainly 'who' says it that counts. Activists cannot compete with authority figures in this regard. For example, debates about the military are usually couched in technical and strategical terms. People are told 'these issues are very complex' and that therefore they should *trust* the specialists - the military experts.

Moreover, people are conditioned to look down upon or disregard those outside the power structure. As long as people defer to the powerful and attribute to them knowledge and rationality, they will simply not listen to those who offer solutions labelled as 'fringe' or 'radical' by the mainstream. Patriarchal conditioning must therefore be addressed directly if activists want people to hear. Patriarchy as a consciousness builds on and reinforces denial, distancing, fear, greed and delusion. It must be named if people are to learn to recognize it.

Manstream strategies also invest a lot of energy in arguing that people have nothing to fear from the enemy. The position implicitly assumes fear of others is the underlying cause of conflict. If the problem is seen as 'them versus us' thinking or narrow identification on the part of militarists and/or citizens, the nature of power interests behind militarism can be obscured.

I would suggest that cold war indoctrination has been a deliberate marketing strategy of the military/industrial complex. (By cold war, I mean a campaign of psychological warfare which instils the belief that only weapons and strength - threatening and aggressive posturing - can provide national security.) What I am suggesting is that had the Russians not existed, someone else would have been created to fill that essential role for political and business

interests. Even here, in safe, cosy Australia, for instance, the response to the easing of East-West hostilities was to justify an increase in defence spending.<sup>1</sup>

The male-driven militarist complex and weapons trade - the world's largest business - has little to do with narrow identification or anthropocentrism; it is simply organized crime. Even in its public face, it operates outside the public purview. For example, in the 1988/89 fiscal year, 1,500 applications for arms exports were made to the Australian government and only five were rejected.<sup>2</sup> Many of these sales were to regimes that violate human rights. This means that the weapons are used by the purchasing governments against their own people. There was no public debate on the issue in Australia. Moreover, public awareness of the potential harm to themselves and the environment was irrelevant to the outcome.

The arms trade should be seen for what it is; for all practical purposes, it is a global extortion and protection racket. It operates just like that other male enclave, the illegal drug trade, only the damage is far greater, affecting not only immediate lives, but the entire global ecosystem. In fact, it is no coincidence that drug trafficking was mixed up with arms deals in the U.S. war against Nicaragua: it is an instance of what is known in business circles as 'vertical integration'. (This is not a 'radical' remark if one considers the human and environmental costs of the arms trade.)

It is convenient to the interests of gangsters that people believe 'fear of others' and nationalism is the cause of war, so people will believe it is their own collective fault: a flaw of human nature rather than profiteerism. Therefore, to treat fear of others or individual perception alone is to treat a symptom of psychological warfare, and to protect from scrutiny the few who directly benefit from the weapons trade.

Given nuclear weapons, there is no security in the existing power-based system. The only security is in better relations. Women have more experience in conflict resolution and relational ways of thinking: these are behaviour patterns and skills that are sorely needed at this point in history. We need to deflate the Patriarchal balloon which supports both the notions of 'dominate or be dominated' and 'father knows best', which allow militarist policy to prevail over common sense and decency.

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<sup>1</sup> In 1986, The Dibbs Report, a *Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities*, was attacked for its defensive - as opposed to offensive - approach. This was largely due to a media beat-up, as explained in Andrew Mack, 1986, *Defence versus Offence: The Dobb Report and Its Critics* working paper no. 14 (Canberra: ANU Peace Research Centre). The following year the Labor Government produced a *White Paper on Defence*, 1987, which emphasized the importance of the shared strategic and geopolitical interests of Indonesia and Australia and the advisability of increased defence spending. The media then generated much public debate over whether the Indonesians were themselves a threat to Australian security.

<sup>2</sup> Report on "60 Minutes", 9 Network Television, 24 February, 1991.

For the sake of argument, let us assume that the problem of the appeal to reason is overcome. What then is the efficacy of personal transformation as a means of social change? We now look at the a-structural or Liberalist strategy that seeks to change people's values through spirituality or personal transformation.

## Personal transformation

Liberalist green approaches (especially deep ecology) differ from Leftist ones regarding their faith in the efficacy of spiritual transformation as a means to social change. However, I have argued that Liberalist strategies also rely on an appeal to reason by attempting to show that to harm nature and other people is to harm the self. They also rely upon what is essentially a 'conversion' to a belief system or way of seeing. While ecofeminism also contributes to the search for a new spirituality, its strategy is to address the abuse of power on personal as well as systemic levels, not merely to transcend it. Ecofeminism suggests that a deconstructive process is necessary to expose and deflate the ideological and psychological pressures upon the ego that fuel the abuse of power. We now look at how Liberalist green strategies often fail to deal with problems related to (a) politics-as-usual, (b) liberalism, (c) mysticism, (d) identification, (e) power seeking and sexism, and (f) cooptation. In the discussion below, I focus here on the Liberalist position, but some points apply to Leftists as well. (Again, Liberalist refers to strategies for social change that begin from the individual; not to be confused with liberal ideology.)

### Politics as usual

Many of the Liberalist orientation stake their program on the belief that individual change, through a non-anthropocentric perception of reality, can bring about a new political and social order. Seen as a strategy, it is essentially directed at changing people's values or belief systems, on the assumption that more 'aware' individuals will make better decisions, or at least cast better votes. This is important. However, in lieu of challenging the (male-controlled) system directly, deep ecologists for example, advocate developing the capacity to identify and integrate with non-human nature, or 'Self-realization'.<sup>1</sup> It has even been asserted that "ethics follow from how we experience the world". Systemic change will somehow follow from ethical change.<sup>2</sup> However, I suggest that our gendered, behavioural programming runs far deeper and is much harder to change than are cerebral concepts such as anthropocentrism, or

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<sup>1</sup> A term developed by Arne Naess.

<sup>2</sup> Arne Naess, quoted in Warwick Fox, 1986, *Approaching Deep Ecology: A Response to Richard Sylvan's Critique of Deep Ecology* Occasional Paper 20 (Hobart: Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania) p. 46.

transcendent concepts such as Self-realization. Also, people have to first *want* to change their beliefs and rational arguments and religious exhortations do not necessarily carry people over this threshold. People, for example, still have to be moved or persuaded to take up deep ecology or a different value system.

This Liberalist strategy contains vestiges of the dominant liberal political and economic paradigm that Liberalists would acknowledge as contributing to the environmental problem. Mainstream liberals assume that simply changing people's values will lead to different voting and/or behaviour patterns. Their reasoning is this: values make people prefer certain lifestyle or political alternatives; therefore, political change can be achieved by persuading others to adopt one's own beliefs. This logic is quite reasonable - but only in a vacuum unaffected by the media, corporate advertising, a liberal orthodoxy, Patriarchal social conditioning and linguistic patterns, and so on. This is because mainstream liberal philosophy is premised on an image of Man as an autonomous individual, separate from His context. Society is seen as the sum of individuals, a perspective which conceals how ideological and institutional structures function to benefit the powerful.

In short, many Liberalist greens eschew liberalism, yet share its context-free logic, which does not acknowledge the full extent to which our mental processes and values are shaped by the Superstructure and Infrastructure of our social institutions. Thus, although many Liberalists are themselves political activists, the approach is essentially 'politics as usual' because it relies ultimately on public pressure or 'numbers' to bring about better social goals and policies. Unfortunately, corporate power is above governments and largely dictates who gets elected and what they do (discussed in Part II). This Liberalist strategy does nothing to undermine the ideological props, or expose the underlying emotional 'needs' that motivate the abuse of power.

There is a certain irony in a position that recognizes that the competitive global economic system creates environmental problems but then proposes a solution that is essentially market-based, relying on consumers to change their values and lifestyles. This is analogous to approaching the drug problem by persuading people to 'just say no,' when we are dealing with something that is profitable precisely because it operates outside the market. The resource extraction and pollution industries do not pay the replacement costs of public resources, and although enmeshed in real competition among themselves, they (like the illegal drug business) *create* their own markets. Likewise, the Green consumer or voter-based strategy encourages us to place a kind of moral responsibility on the victim, distracting attention from the profiteers.<sup>1</sup> Although people demand goods, they do not, for example, demand that these

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<sup>1</sup> The adoption of this approach may relate to an implicit assumption among many liberals that institutional change involves either violent revolution or authoritarian repression. An example of this view is expressed in



goods be made with new toxic materials and processes that replace natural ones. Consumers have not actually made these kinds of choices.

Recent events illustrate that educating consumers is less urgent than retooling our technocratic, political, and corporate decision-making arenas. Consumers would surely not object, for instance, if their creature comforts were provided via solar energy. In fact, public enthusiasm for recycling centres, environmentally-friendly products, and recycled paper has outstripped the supply, yet in the early 1990s, recycling centres were closing in Australia.<sup>1</sup> Industry has not been buying the material simply because, in our distorted economy, live trees are cheaper than used ones. This phenomenon is a function of power relations that shape institutions, laws, and economic and Planning methods, and only partly a function of chauvinism toward other life forms.

Cultivating consumer awareness through grass roots action is no big problem. It has proven relatively easy to legislate to change consumer habits, especially when backed by the ethic-building activities of a diverse environmental/peace movement. Car pools, speed limits, tax incentives for energy conservation, water meters, labelling laws, and litter fines are effective interim measures - at least when not blocked by industry lobbies.<sup>2</sup> Thus power, and not consumerism, is the crucial issue.

### Liberalism

Much green strategic thought is still trapped in traditional liberal reformist thought in other ways as well. A liberal paradigm may be adequate for resolving social justice issues, but not preservation ones. As discussed in Part II, this is because it frames all environmental issues in terms of distributional claims among competing interests in resources. Liberalists tend to equate environmental ethics with 'egalitarianism' (perhaps because it is consistent with the concept of rights, the 'social contract', and 'mushroom model of Man'). In this framework, responsibilities are construed as merely mutual rights. If social justice is simply transposed onto other life forms, however, we would 'balance the interests' between humans and other species, which in reality means incrementally trading off nature to meet human needs. This limited liberal conception of ethics is still commonplace in green thinking.<sup>3</sup>

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William Ophuls, 1977, *Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity: Prologue to a Political Theory of the Steady State* (S. F.: W. H. Freeman).

<sup>1</sup> Recently, recycling centres are beginning to reopen again.

<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the packaging industry in Australia has invested vast sums in campaigns against can and bottle deposit legislation.

Similarly, as in liberalism, much green thought has often emphasized the self over community. Mainstream liberals devalue the idea of community as being a mere aggregate of individuals, whereas I use 'community' to refer to a sense of mutuality and reciprocity (rather than a parochial identification with a particular group.) As we say in Part II, liberalism excludes the idea of community from its conception of what is essential to human well-being, and fails to fully appreciate that we are what we are because of nature, culture, and emotional bonds. Thus, liberalism reflects and reinforces the estrangement of autonomous Man from the feminine, community and nature. Liberalist green thought does not fully escape this legacy. It is also two-tiered - relating to the self and the biotic community - though it seeks to bridge this Man-made gap. Thus even while Liberalist greens would reunite Man with nature, community and women's' cultures remain in the background.

Furthermore, this Mainstream emphasis on the individual 'at one with nature' again distracts attention from structural and systemic issues. Institutions embody values, so they must be changed as well. Of course, some constructive institutional reforms have been put forth by green theorists, and others, including bioregionalism, decentralized and direct democracy, and the new economics.<sup>1</sup> These ideas, however, can also be supported by anthropocentric perspectives and, in fact, draw on the prior work of anthropocentric ecologists, social ecologists, and anarchists.<sup>2</sup> Also, as Judith Plant points out, these new lifestyles and organizational modes require feminism - the revaluing of life-giving values, conflict resolution, physical work, and the reintegration of men into the home:

One of the key ideas of bioregionalism is the decentralization of power: moving further and further toward self-governing forms of social organization. The further we move in this direction, the closer we get to what has traditionally been thought of as a 'woman's sphere' - that is, home and its close surroundings... The catch is that, in practice, home, with all its attendant roles, will not be anything different from what it has been throughout recent history *without* the enlightened perspective

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Lawrence E. Johnson, 1991, *A Morally Deep World: An Essay on Moral Significance and Environmental Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

<sup>1</sup> See Van Andrus, Christopher Plant, Judith Plant, and Eleanor Wright, eds., 1990, *Home! A Bioregional Reader* (Lillooet B.C.: New Society Publishers); Herman E. Daly and John B. Cobb, jr., 1989, *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future* (Boston: Beacon Press); Paul Ekins, ed., 1986, *The Living Economy: A New Economics in the Making* (London: Routledge). Also see Marilyn Waring, 1988, *Counting for Nothing: What Men Value and What Women are Worth* (London: Allen & Unwin).

<sup>2</sup> For example, see Aldo Leopold, 1949, *Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Wendell Berry, 1977, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books); Murray Bookchin, 1964, "Ecology and Revolutionary Thought" Available from Left Green Network, Burlington VT, 05492; Petr Kropotkin, 1971, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (NY: Horizon Press); Emile Caponya and Keitha Tomkins, eds., 1976, *The Essential Kropotkin* (London: Macmillan).

offered by feminism. Women's values, centred around life-giving, must be revalued, elevated from their once subordinate role.<sup>1</sup>

Another vestige of liberalism in Manstream thought is the view of political activity as being exclusively a means to an end: a goal-oriented activity. However, grassroots or hands-on community involvement is an important means of Self-realization as well. For example, it has often been suggested that people 'need to save themselves before they can save the forests'. However, in the absence of serious personal problems, it is hard to understand how one can make such a separation: when part of a rainforest dies, part of us dies. Personal development, I believe, requires the sometimes painful process of community participation as well as contemplation. Furthermore, the view of politics as a means to an end is corrosive. When we implicitly suggest 'we need power to make change', we have already begun to compromise.

It is certainly valuable to criticize anthropocentrism in favour of biocentrism. However, the significance of ignoring the very real problems of building community and restructuring institutions is this: an environmental ethic that does not offer a chance of saving the natural environment is not an environmental ethic. The relationship between social change and individual perception or spirituality is, therefore, crucial to the relevance of the Liberalist green program for social transformation. Hence we now embark upon the politics of mysticism and transcendence.

### Mysticism

As Helen Forsey notes, "in certain patriarchal philosophies the concept of connectedness, union, nirvana, exists: but it has been narrowly conceived by men in exclusively spiritual terms".<sup>2</sup> Patriarchal spirituality has been transcendent and earth-disdaining rather than earth-honouring. In Starhawk's words, "power-from-within must be grounded, or connected to the earth, to the actual material conditions of life".<sup>3</sup> Otherwise, it cannot lead to real social change.

First, history does not bear out the presumed causal connection between 'spiritual' change and behaviour. Most religions begin as spiritual movements, but they are eventually crystallized and institutionalized to become part of an officially-sanctioned power structure. For instance, Buddhism shares a spiritual base with much Manstream philosophy, and does *not* alter social structures based on dominance relationships. Consider, for example, the position of women and the widespread environmental destruction in Buddhist states and societies.

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<sup>1</sup> Judith Plant, 1990, "Searching for Common Ground: Ecofeminism & Bioregionalism", in Van Andrus et al., eds., 1991, *above* pp. 79-85.

<sup>2</sup> Helen Forsey, 1989, "Community--Meeting Our Deepest Needs", in Plant, ed., 1989, *above* pp. 227-34 at p. 231.

<sup>3</sup> Starhawk, 1989, "Feminist, Earth-based Spirituality and Ecofeminism", in Plant, ed., 1989, *above* pp. 174-185 at p. 177.

Second, spirituality, belief systems, or world views do not necessarily improve individual behaviour. This is because behaviour is not solely a product of either rationality or beliefs. Behaviour patterns are so deeply encoded that we often do not perceive them. Ways of acting and relating are ingrained from earliest childhood, a product of habit, role-modelling, social reinforcement, and institutions. This is one reason why there is often a gap between what people believe in and what they will do to get their own way, along the whole spectrum from personal to international relations. I have seen religions reinforce and rationalize prejudice and cruelty, but not cure them. (Spirituality does, of course, help to motivate people to save the planet.)

Third, individual moral behaviour is constrained by power relationships and institutional corruption. We observed above that environmental and social problems are underwritten by the profitability of resource exploitation and the arms trade. Even if we had an ecologically-sound Planning system, the pressures of our militarist economy would nullify any structures, plans, or programs designed to conserve natural resources over the long term.

Fourth, changing people's way of thinking through spiritual or educational persuasion does not reach the prime movers. Even the conversion of five billion people might not reach the top thousand in the transnational resource corporations and the military. There is little point in beseeching the godfathers to adopt a new ethic: in real life, there is always someone to take their place. A case in point is India today. Despite a Gandhi who inspired a mass movement which toppled the powerful, one power structure merely replaced another.

Fifth, getting more leaders on one's side would not be enough to change the rules of the game or the umpire's bias. (Even the omnipresent game metaphor itself reflects a Masculine bias: it is not a game.) More enlightened decision makers would only slow the rapidly increasing disparity between rich and poor, the plundering of the public estate, and the relentless drive toward market totalitarianism.

Sixth, the insufficiency of spirituality alone to effect social change is obvious when the military industries and arms trade are seen for the international extortion and protection racket that they really are. In this context, spiritual approaches in isolation from gender and institutional factors merely serve the power structure. Can we really expect to prevent institutionalized crime by cultivating inner peace and a mystical appreciation of nature (however important these may be in other contexts)?

Seventh, even if a new perception could change behaviour, it is unrealistic to expect people to adopt a new way of 'experiencing the world' within the given time frame. Many, for instance, have argued that Christianity, if actually practiced, would prevent the desecration of

nature.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps it could, but it took hundreds of years for Christianity to take hold, and it did not work as intended even when whole societies were Christian - and we have only a few years to stop the destruction of the non-human environment.

Eighth, many have invested heavily in the hope that the 'crisis of life conditions on Earth' could cause society to choose this new path. But crises cannot be relied upon as a catalyst to positive change, as we saw with the oil crisis of the early 1970s and the U.S.-Iraq crisis of 1991. Crises are, moreover, subject to manipulation, as when the nuclear industry uses its vast resources to promote fear of ozone depletion for the wrong reasons. In addition, as those in the peace movement know all too well, crises create fear and denial, which militate against the cooperation and planning that are necessary to save the planet.

Finally, despite their good intentions, spiritual movements set up a 'them versus us' relationship between the believers and the less enlightened, and a conviction that there is one right orientation toward experiencing reality, however personalized it may be. Such movements run the risk of creating a hierarchy of beliefs. For instance, some have suggested that it is somehow 'deeper' to perceive nature as an extension of the self, rather than, say, as a cathedral or an art gallery.<sup>2</sup> As has been the case with some religions, we may begin to judge others by their beliefs, rather than by their deeds. However, we are what we *do* about the desecration of human and non-human nature, not what we believe in. In short, personal transformation may be necessary, but it is an insufficient condition for social change.

## Identification

Deep personal and social change require self-criticism. Deep ecologists, however, focus on 'identification', reasoning that if people learned to expand their sense of identity to encompass all of nature, they would realize that to harm nature is to harm themselves. Paradoxically, as noted above, this relies on a person's sense of 'self-interest', as opposed to a sense of intrinsic value:

Altruism implies that ego sacrifices its interests in favor of the other, the alter.... The motivation is primarily that of duty.... It is unfortunately very limited what people are capable to love from mere duty or more generally from moral exhortation. Unhappily the extensive moralizing from environmentalists has given the public the false impression that we primarily ask them to sacrifice to show more responsibility, more concern, better morals.... The requisite care flows naturally if the self is

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, Robin Attfield, 1983, *The Ethics of Environmental Concern* (NY: Columbia Press) and H.J. McCloskey, 1983, *Ecological Ethics and Politics* (N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield) who argue that traditional ethical precepts, Christian and utilitarian, are sufficient for dealing with environmental problems. For an opposing view, see Henlee Barnette, 1972, *The Church and the Ecological Crisis* (MI: Eerdmans).

<sup>2</sup> For example, see William Godfrey-Smith, 1980, "Environmental Philosophy", *Habitat Australia* (June) pp. 24-25.

widened and deepened so that protection of nature is felt and perceived as protection of ourselves.<sup>1</sup>

Altruism is a difficult concept for the Manstream to deal with because altruism cannot be squeezed into the Masculine model of Man. Patriarchal ideology sees altruism in terms of a negation of self-interested Man, just as it defines women's feelings and experience as the absence of *real* thought and knowledge. Altruism is therefore denied or redefined in Manstream theory as self-interest that benefits others. There is altruism all around, for example, in the work of greens and women who put their own interests behind those of their families, children and the environment. That energy and good will could be affirmed and nurtured, rather than exploited and co-opted.

Deep ecologists are correct in appreciating that people do not change through reason alone. But would it not be more Ethical to develop our faculty of caring for other life forms for their own sake, rather than because we identify with them? Morality and gender are social constructions; if women can be socialized to take pleasure in the happiness of others, surely Mankind can be as well.

One does not need a new philosophy to realize that self-interest and the well-being of the planet are inseparable. Common sense indicates this, whether one is anthropocentric or not. Some deep ecologists have argued that anthropocentric arguments are self-defeating, since they reinforce human identification and therefore could cause people to eliminate species that are not 'useful'.<sup>2</sup> This wrongly assumes, however, that some creatures have no survival value to the ecosystems upon which humans depend, a position inconsistent with a biocentric perspective. And, unfortunately, those yet unsympathetic to a biocentric vision are unlikely to be moved by abstract, elitist arguments that pretend sex and power do not exist.

In fact, the environmentally concerned citizenry are being persuaded that the disruptions to natural systems to date have been so catastrophic that any further tinkering with ecosystems is life-threatening. The problem is that they are psychologically disempowered, so that many practice denial. It has become obvious that to fool around with the integrity of the food chain, genetic engineering, and radioactive waste is extremely risky and self-destructive - yet Mankind does it. Self-interest has not prevented Mankind from harming people or nature so far, so it is unlikely that a change in our human identification would lead to a cessation of violence against nature. After all, if 'homocentric Man' is bent on homicide (40 thousand children die

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<sup>1</sup> Arne Naess, the "father" of deep ecology, quoted in Joanna Macy, 1989, "Awakening to the Ecological Self", in Plant, ed., *above* pp. 201-11 at p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> See for example, Warwick Fox, 1990, *Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism* (Boston: Shambhala) at p. 186, and Robyn Eckersley, 1990, "The Ecocentric Perspective", in Cassandra Pybus and Richard Flanagan, ed., *The Rest of the World is Watching* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan) pp. 68-78.

needlessly each day), then why - in the real world - would the new 'biocentric Man' not commit biocide?

Of course, it would be desirable if we all could work toward Self-realization through a process of expanding our sense of self, but it is doubtful that real personal change can occur without the conscious and painful process of self-criticism that is required to reject power and ego. In short, gender identification is more central to human behaviour than human identification, and the focus on anthropocentrism protects the Masculine ego from scrutiny. There is another issue raised by identification as a means of change. We must ask ourselves if we are really identifying with nature or with an intellectual club. Self-realization or an expanded sense of self may, in real life, be a projecting of the ego rather than a transcending of anthropocentrism. Our tendency to project our egos upon the cosmos is, after all, a time-honoured androcentric trait.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, rather than all-encompassing, the vision of deep ecology is a detached world view. To 'transcend' is to put oneself above: to separate the self and world problems. There is a tendency to try to transcend our egos, privilege, and dominance relationships by simply 'overlooking' them. Anyone who would be reading this (as well as I myself) benefits from and thus perpetuates past exploitative relationships on a personal, class, or national level. So do environmental gurus. One cannot claim to transcend the Power Paradigm while benefiting from Patriarchy. It is not enough to give up materialism: if we do not deal with personal power and dominance relationships, we are part of the problem, regardless of our degree of empathy, political awareness, and transcendental purity.

### **Power seeking and sexism**

The green movement must be able to set an example if it wishes to claim that better societies are possible. A major impediment to social change is an old source of friction found within the green movement itself: Patriarchy within its own ranks. This is revealed in the movement's backgrounding of women, the grass roots and racial 'minorities'.

Some men and Masculine-identified women expect to be 'spokesmen' and will not lick envelopes, learn from others 'beneath' themselves, or share information. Sexism also excludes many selfless volunteers from meaningful participation. A majority of green activists (as opposed to 'spokesmen') are women, yet a significant percentage eventually leave the movement because they find that it is a microcosm of Patriarchal society at large.<sup>2</sup> Very often those women who are 'threatening' or who question processes are simply eased out by indirect means. This exclusion is seldom executed in full consciousness, but, again, gender-blindness

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<sup>1</sup> See Marilyn, French, 1985, *Beyond Power: Women, Men and Morals* (London: Jonathon Cape) at p.210.

<sup>2</sup> See Jane Elix, 1990, "Green Girls and Ecoogical Housewives", *Refractory Girl* 35, pp. 11-14.

is power-blindness. If men are sincere about saving the earth, they should be willing to relinquish personal privileges based on sex, and begin listening to women.

There is a related tendency among greens to become estranged from the genuine grassroots and to begin to see themselves as the grassroots instead. Movements that begin through knocking on doors and face-to-face contact with the average citizen often become bureaucratized and hierarchical. Information and assistance tend to flow into environmental organizations, rather than out into the community in ways that can empower people at the periphery. This means losing sight of the essential need for community building. Until the green movement addresses Patriarchal attitudes in its own backyard, it will not serve as a reliable basis upon which to work for social transformation.

None of these problems of sexism and elitism that are sometimes found in the movement are really corrected by a biocentric vision. Self-realization is no substitute for self-reflexive learning: when we stop asking questions, we become part of the problem. One learns about oneself by being in the movement - by taking responsibility and working collectively with others - not by contributing as an expert or leader.

### **Cooptation**

If people see the environmental movement as a platform for personal and professional advancement, and if they cannot assume leadership roles, they will move on to another forum. Patriarchy thus creates fertile ground for cooptation, which affects both the credibility and the long-term effectiveness of the movement. As long as the green movement remains Patriarchal, government and industry will be able to set the agenda and rules of the game. The unconscious desire to be accepted by the powerful, or within society at large, means activists can be 'bought off' by giving them a stake in the power structure. This is why new forms of 'conflict resolution' have been means of reducing conflict, rather than resolving the problem.

A case in point, as we have seen, is the recent trend in Australia toward negotiation and mediation between industry and environmental 'spokesmen', which has really been a form of 'corporatization' (again, the process in which resources are allocated via negotiated arrangements between government and powerful special interest groups.) For conservation groups to be included in this process at first blush appears a major victory - the legitimization of environmental concern. However, conflict resolution conducted by power brokers is not a real departure from business-as-usual. In the long term, the corporatization of the environment movement is no answer. The process is reminiscent of a board game devised in the United States. 'Blacks and Whites' was designed so that the black pieces had all kinds of strategies and manoeuvres available to them but they could never win. Although the 'playing field' may be level, the powerful can move the goal posts. Moreover, industry can always counter public demand for wilderness by (say) creating a greater public demand for consumable goods or



frightening them into depression. The best way to close people's minds is to tighten their belts. (This, of course, often occurs not as a deliberate conspiracy, but as part of the dynamics of politics: "do whatever seems to help one's position at any given time".)

## Feminist strategy

I have suggested that problems created by power relations cannot be resolved by transcendence, 'monkey wrenching',<sup>1</sup> or pressure politics alone. Manstream environmentalism is bringing about ecological awareness but not basic social change. To change our way of thinking, relating, and acting requires more than a new self-image, metaphysics, policies, or structures. People will not want to abandon personal and political power simply because cooperative, reciprocal relationships are more ecologically sensible or 'spiritually sound'. Rationalist approaches which appeal to intellect, and religious approaches which appeal to spirituality have proven inadequate. Due to the realities of power relationships in Patriarchal society, we must recognize that policies will not change until people with power in the military, corporate and bureaucratic establishments cooperate of their own accord. The trick is how to motivate power-driven men and women to change their behaviour at personal, social and institutional levels. To supplement this brief treatment of ecofeminism practice, I provide a concrete example in Appendix 2.

### The personal

I have tried to show that, despite the diversity of strategies and approaches developed by Manstream greens, many have unwittingly been thinking, working, and relating at one level - the *impersonal*. Although 'transcendent' approaches (those that appeal to the rational or spiritual) have value, we must also begin to look at personal motivations for power-seeking.

What *motivates* people in real life? I have suggested that we examine the centrality of the need for love, sex, and gender identification in behaviour at the political as well as personal level. For example the sex drive is a motivating force which Manstream theories prudishly avoid. (Among many mammals, for example, the male instinctive drive for dominance and territory is a means to obtain sexual privilege and hence reproduction of the species.) Power has often been called the greatest aphrodisiac, and power is obtained through the control and exploitation of social and natural resources. Whether the drive for power and control in humans is socially or biologically constructed, it should not be ignored. While the denial and

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to 'macho' forms of direct action like tinkering with machinery, removing survey stakes, or tree spiking associated with Earth First! See Dave Foreman and Bill Haywood, eds., 1989, *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*, 2nd ed. (AZ: Ned Ludd Books) and Edward Abbey, 1990, *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (UT: Dream Garden Press).

repression of the irrational, personal, and feminine as a factor in the abuse of power may seem obvious, it is difficult to find any recognition of this in Manstream theory, either mainstream or radical.

I have also argued that, due to the omnipresence of Patriarchy and the Power Paradigm in Western culture, fundamental change can only come about when those in command get *personal* satisfaction and security from devolving power to others. This can begin to happen when we recognize that a spade is just a 'bloody shovel', and that power and territoriality are merely manifestations of unrequited needs for sex, security and recognition that could be acquired in more satisfactory, mature ways. To move beyond power-based relationships, then, we need to expose and redress the personal insecurities and unconscious motives underlying the power drive and *demystify the social conception of Masculinity as power*.

We should work to dissociate Masculinity from the images of heroism, conquest, and death-defiance so familiar in militaristic fantasies; from the images of competitiveness, individualism, and aggression glorified in sport; from the images of objectivity, linearity, and reductionism exalted by science; and from the images of hierarchy, progress, and control entrenched in the technocracy. If polarized Masculinity were revealed in its true form, extreme egocentrism, it might cease to be so 'sexy' to both men and women. No heroic social agency is needed to 'take power', we can withdraw the power, energy, and deference we unwittingly give to the powerful and the ideology of Masculinity that supports them.

With regard to the dominant males, or megalomaniacs, the advice of Barbara Walker is relevant, if excessively colourful.

Men do not voluntarily relinquish their ego trips, war toys and money games. Like spoiled children, many men push selfish behaviour as far as they can, perhaps secretly trying to reach the point where Mother will clamp down and say "No more", and mean it ... When many women together say no and mean it, the whole structure can collapse.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to those who blindly follow, we should appreciate that they see themselves as failures because they do not 'measure up' to the Masculine stereotype and yet are afraid to deal with their feelings and insecurities for fear of 'exposing themselves' as possibly unMasculine.<sup>2</sup> If they were affirmed in terms of a different concept of Masculinity or humanity, they would be more reluctant to blindly follow megalomaniac leaders for reflected glory.

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara G. Walker 1985, *The Crone: Woman of Age, Wisdom, and Power* (S.F.: Harper & Row) at pp. 175-6.

<sup>2</sup> Heather Formaini, 1990, *Men: The Darker Continent* (London: Mandarin) at p. 8.

## The social

Second, ecofeminism suggests new forms of activism and strategy. Masculine-identified people in the environment movement often get caught up in winning the game (or even just getting on the media), rather than saving the forest. The obsession with scoring points is goal displacement. It makes green strategy predictable and therefore easy for the powerful to outfox. In my experience, the greatest successes and failures of the Tasmanian green movement have been directly related to the sense of community, love, and support that has existed within the campaigns at a given time. When relations become Patriarchal, or when self-appointed leaders take charge, the workers seem gradually to lose heart.

Feminist process is direct, hands-on, and face-to-face. Perhaps because women have generally been marginalized by the Power Paradigm, they have been able to pioneer creative forms of direct action. Feminists strategies tend to circumvent the hierarchy and rules of the game. Being more direct, they place problems face-to-face with solutions. For example, Greenham Common and similar actions brought soldiers face-to-face with the fact that their individual participation in the system had immediate, personal impacts. Women in the Third World have led the way in designing creative and community-building ways of protecting themselves and their environment, such as the Chipko (hug-the-trees) movement and the women of Bhopal in India.<sup>1</sup>

More recently, however, grassroots groups fighting toxics in the west have also set a new direction. These groups are largely composed of women and this is reflected in strategy.<sup>2</sup> They are no longer abiding by the hierarchical rules behind which hide those in authority. At the same time, they are avoiding the use of Masculinist power-based modes, such as sabotage. Rather than playing the games of the politicians or bureaucrats - the gatekeepers of industry - they have gone directly to the managers of business and industry, insisting that the industrial processes or products themselves be changed. The approach is face-to-face and communicative, reminding the decision makers of their personal responsibilities as members of the human and biotic community.<sup>3</sup>

In my view, ecofeminist consciousness, analyses, and strategies offer real grounds for hope at this point in time. Women are dispersed throughout societies and have potential influence

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<sup>1</sup> See Radha Bhatt, 1989, "Lakshmi Ashram: A Gandhian Perspective in the Himalayan Foothills", in Plant, ed., *above* pp. 168-73, and Pamela Philipose, 1989, "Women Act: Women and Environmental Protection in India", in Plant, ed., *above* pp. 67-75.

<sup>2</sup> Kate Short, 1992, "The Australian Toxics Network: Why Women Do It", in Ronnie Harding, ed., *Ecopolitics V: Proceedings* (Sydney: University of NSW) pp. 506-508.

<sup>3</sup> See Gary Cohen and John O'Connor, 1990, *Fighting Toxics: A Manual for Protecting your Family, Community and Workplace* (Washington D.C.: Island Press).

everywhere and, in my experience, women are generally able to listen. The danger, of course, is the tendency toward cooptation of women into the Patriarchal value system. But men in Western societies are increasingly seeking liberation from their Patriarchal programming. All sexes can work to *affirm* the feminine values of caring, openness, nurturing, and non-defensiveness and the possibility of creating societies in harmony with all living beings.

### The institutional

Third, feminists are realizing that it is also necessary to dismantle and redesign of the Man-made conceptual and institutional frameworks that reinforce and legitimize power-based relationships.<sup>1</sup> Having come to realize that they cannot rely on officials, experts or politicians to implement green/feminist ideas, more and more women are trying to reform the system themselves - not because it is their destiny to clean up after others, but because only they, it seems, can. Nurturing Patriarchs into doing the job is futile. Feminists have been working at all levels to deconstruct the Masculinist theories, structures, attitudes, and behaviour that militate against the environment (as I attempted to do in Part II). Unfortunately, mainstream and radical greens alike have not availed themselves of feminist theory. We need to deconstruct the existing institutional systems to expose the biases which work against environmental protection and social justice. This entails de-mystifying our social conception of Masculinity and power, and exposing the insecurities and pressures reinforced by Patriarchal culture and reflected in decision-making theories, processes, methods, and structures. We also need to develop new social forms for decision making that affirm a Feminine conception of Ethics, and move beyond the constraints of Masculine, rights-based norms.

I have tried to demonstrate that feminist approaches to the fundamental restructuring of society are *not* marginal, irrational and insubstantial, contrary to the way they are consistently portrayed (to the extent feminists are not entirely ignored). My contention has been that ecofeminism provides a complete and useful paradigm to guide personal, socio-cultural and institutional transformation. If given affirmation, it would offer fertile ground for new analytical and strategic insights in Manstream theories as well.

Ecofeminism makes the links between human oppression and environmental exploitation, and between the personal/psychological and political/institutional dimensions of the modern crisis, by showing that the abuse of political power is inseparable from the abuse of personal power. In so doing, it validates the idea that everyone can make a difference. The social 'elevation' at which one works is not important. One need not obtain professional or political 'credibility', the first refuge of sycophants and cowards. As a society, we still defer to the powerful, but it only takes a (proverbial) child to point out that the Emperor has no clothes.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Evelyn Reed, 1978, *Sexism and Science* (NY: Pathfinder), Kathy A. Mackinnon, 1989, *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press).

## To where from here?

In summary, I would like to offer suggestions as to many directions for further exploration that have been suggested by a feminist analysis of the Planning system:

(a) a deconstruction of social decision-making institutions to reveal the centrality of gender-blindness, androcentrism, and hierarchical dualism, and the bias these create against social justice, peace and environmental protection (the prerequisites to sustainability).

(b) a redefinition of human 'needs' to include emotional (as opposed to merely social and material needs) such as caring relationships, a sense of community, and contact with wilderness.

(c) a reinterpretation of human behaviour that considers non-rational motives (such as the drive for dominance and territoriality) through which emotional needs are presently obtained (or displaced) in Patriarchal society.

(d) a new framework of analysis that allows us to understand the environmental problem in terms of the abuse of power (as opposed to, say, inadequate knowledge and control).

Diminishing land and resources result more from the diversion of undervalued public resources to special interests than from a lack of technological advancement or good policies.

(e) a redefinition of environmental conflict as a 'symptom' of Manstream thought- rather than as a natural form of pluralist social interaction in a rational resource distribution system to be resolved through trade-offs between economic and environmental considerations.

(f) a recognition that the standard 'solution' - the so-called balance between society and nature, between competing values and interests, or between progress and preservation - is an ideologically-biased norm which contributes to non-sustainable decision making.

(g) a reconception of the institution of Planning as an 'environmental conflict resolution' system, instead of a narrow dispute settlement system. (While adversarial processes have their place early in the decision-making process, they are now central.)

(h) a redefinition of the activity of planning to refer to a community-based process of determining social, economic, and environmental goals in the long term public interest - rather than to a means of resolving individual conflicts or choices among present options.

(i) a new ecological goal for all Planning activity: prevention as opposed to cure. This means certain ecological criteria would be paramount, such as restoring the life support system, preserving biological and cultural diversity, avoiding risk and keeping social options open.

(j) a new (tri-partite) Constitution for environmental governance that institutionalizes a separate Ethics-based Planning sphere for determining and prioritizing basic needs and the means to achieve them.

(k) a rationalization of existing practices to encompass what is now top down and bottom up Planning in one arena, such that problems of production and consumption can be considered and mediated together.

(l) a new constitutional basis for Planning that will enable the redesign of Planning methods and processes to allow us to determine the substantive ethical issues that underlie environmental preservation.

(m) new democratic and administrative processes to reduce the potential abuse of power and empower the general public, and new types of criteria by which to consider development proposals.

(n) a reconception of regulations as explicitly adjusting externalities rather than constraining development or, more generally, a recognition that 'freedom from' the abuse of power is at least an equally important right as 'freedom to'.

It is time to enter uncharted territory. Taking an entirely new direction is no easy matter, but going in circles is becoming wholly unviable. Whether or not the particular ideas that have emerged in this initial exploration prove useful, I hope that they generate some debate on what I consider to be the present blind spots and taboos in our culture that are blocking a better understanding of the environmental crisis and the means to social and institutional transformation.

## APPENDIX 1: CASE STUDY

### A brief history of environmental conflict in Tasmania

This capsule history is a case study of environmental governance and decision making in Tasmania. It does not pretend to be non-partisan or objective, but represents the greens' point of view generally, based on extensive informal interviews and first-hand knowledge, supplemented by newspaper articles and other sources. Many people generously vetted the facts and observations.

The reasons for this approach are several: (a) to exemplify statements in the text about the nature of environmental decision making which mainstream theory ignores, (b) to support my case that greens recognize that politicians are not moved by rational arguments, yet persist in strategies that rely upon the rationality of politicians and voters, and (c) to illustrate the importance of Masculine pride in decision making. As to the moral, perhaps the words of Hesba Brinsmead Hungerford sum it up best, in writing of the Premier and leader of the Opposition:

It is irony that the Earth and its future should rest in the chubby hands of such as Tweedledum and Tweedledee, nursery figures, surely. In the vastness of time and space, we are of course all nursery figures. Yet the planet Earth is ours to destroy.<sup>1</sup>

#### Lake Pedder

The story begins on the shores Lake Pedder, a pristine mountain lake set among mountain ranges 800 million years old. Lake Pedder had been declared part of a (59,000 acre) National Park in 1955. In 1961 the South-West Committee was formed to lobby for the protection of the South West Wilderness by joining it to Lake Pedder Park.<sup>2</sup> In October 1968, this plan was realized. However, the Hydro-Electric Commission (HEC), had already secretly decided to flood Lake Pedder, on the assumption that a use for the energy would appear.<sup>3</sup> There were hints as early as 1962 that the Lake would be 'modified',<sup>4</sup> but it was not until 1967 that the

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<sup>1</sup> Hesba Brinsmead Hungerford, 1983, *I Will Not Say the Day is Done* (Sydney: Alternative Publishing Cooperative).

<sup>2</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at pp. 45-49.

<sup>3</sup> Evidence of this is presented by Kevin Kiernan, 1985, "I Saw My Temple Ransacked", in Bob Brown, Kevin Kiernan, Ralph and Elspeth Hope-Johnstone, and Geoff Parr, *Lake Pedder* (Hobart: The Wilderness Society) pp. 18-23 at p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 51.

project was announced officially to the press. The HEC apparently felt that drowning the Lake under 50 feet of water would not have an impact on the park.

The first committee to save Lake Pedder was organized that same year. Opposition grew. The first petition was signed by 10,000 people.<sup>1</sup> A bus circulated Tasmania to spread word of what was to be destroyed. The photographer Olegas Truchanas presented slide shows and later a movie of Lake Pedder to packed crowds. In 1969, Brenda Hean, a highly respected and respectable 'society lady' and now leading advocate for the Lake's preservation, discovered to her dismay that the newly elected Liberal Premier had ordered her exhibition of colour slides on Lake Pedder closed.<sup>2</sup>

The Pedder people called for a referendum, but the government rejected the request in 1970 before a packed public gallery of Lake supporters<sup>3</sup> (perhaps because a large majority of those responding to a newspaper poll opposed the drowning). The rejection of the referendum led to the formation of the Lake Pedder Action Committee that same year, the members of which came to be labelled the 'ratbag fringe'. The HEC was sufficiently impressed by public opinion to hire a public relations person however.<sup>4</sup>

In 1971, the Pedder people organized a symposium to present the scientific and social values of the lake and invited all the key politicians and proponents of the dam. None came. At the end of that year, the dam closed on the Serpentine River. Soon the Lake would begin to drown. The Pedder people kept a silent vigil at the Lake as it slowly filled. A bust of Truganini, the last of the full-blooded Tasmanian aborigines, stood waiting on top of a pedestal at the Lake shore, as a poignant reminder that it was victim to the same forces that had wrested her people so violently from her.

Having lost most of his photographs in the horrific Hobart bush fire of 1967, Olegas Truchanas took off on another expedition to record for posterity areas that would soon be destroyed for about 40 years of electric power. His accidental death on that trip was only one of several tragedies that beset the Pedder people.

In 1972, an anonymous call from a HEC worker tipped off the greens that their employer, the HEC, had told them to come to the greens big public meeting in Hobart to break it up. When the greens arrived at the locked hall, every seat had a leaflet headed "Why Lake Pedder is

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<sup>1</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 88.

<sup>3</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 93.

<sup>4</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 98



Being Enlarged".<sup>1</sup> Despite the disruption, the meeting of March 23, 1972, chaired by the (late and) fearless Dr. Richard (Dick) Jones, witnessed the formation of world's first green party. The United Tasmania Group, or UTG, would contest the coming election in just three weeks.

In the ensuing election campaign, the HEC, using public funds, fought the UTG in an expensive and scandalous advertising blitz. Although two green candidates almost got elected, the UTG failed to win a seat in Parliament, despite a proportional voting system that favours minority representation. Labor got back in power.

The greens had an information stall at Salamanca Place, an open market in Hobart where thousands of citizens come on a Saturday morning. It was ordered closed by Parliament.<sup>2</sup> No worries; the 'Women's Wilderness Walkers' womaned the stall with a new name.

As the road to the site had already been built, at Commonwealth expense, the state government said it was too late to stop. So the greens (as they later came to be known) decided to ask the federal government for an equal grant to build an alternate scheme. A canal and road could provide the same amount of energy, but the environmental damage would be minimal. When society came to its senses, they reckoned, nature could reclaim the land. What could be more reasonable? All the Premier had to do was sign his name to the request. He refused.

1972 was the year of the first International Convention on the Environment. The greens secured a petition signed by 187 scientists at the Stockholm convention, humbly requesting no more than an inquiry into a possible delay of the flooding. When the petition was presented to Parliament by Labor M.P. Michael Hodgman, the Parliament refused to look at it.

The Commonwealth promised the money to build the alternate scheme, but it was now the Labor Premier's turn to refuse Commonwealth largess.<sup>3</sup> Hesba Brinsmead Hungerford explained his reasoning thus:

All Dum [Tweedledum] need do was sign a paper accepting the federal grant. Surely that would cost him nothing. But it seemed it would. It would cost him his pride. That was too high a price to pay.<sup>4</sup>

Dick Jones received anonymous phone calls which led to the discovery that the flooding was illegal because it was in a National Park yet lacked a management plan.<sup>5</sup> Without the

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<sup>1</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 111.

<sup>2</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 88.

<sup>3</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 127.

<sup>4</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 131.

standing to sue in their own name, those opposing the dam needed the Attorney-General to sue or grant permission for them to bring the action. But Labor Premier Reece, known as 'Electric Eric', demanded that the Attorney-General, Mervyn Everett not do so, and the latter resigned in protest. Reece then appointed himself Attorney-General and introduced a bill to *retroactively* legalize the flooding of the lake.<sup>1</sup>

Defeated at state level, it was necessary for the greens to take the cause to the nation. Consequently, two activists, Brenda Hean and Max Price, set off in a World War I Tiger Moth to sky write over the Nation's Capital on the mainland. Before the flight, Brenda Hean had told friends of anonymous and ominous phone threats referring to her "going for a swim": "Would you like to go for a swim?", the voice kept repeating.<sup>2</sup> Brenda and Max took off one fateful morning for the mainland, but they never arrived. It was later discovered that the door of the hangar had been tampered with the night before the flight and navigation equipment had been removed from the plane. The government refused to appoint a Royal Commission and all evidence of foul play was officially ignored.

Meanwhile, in 1972, an academic, who had obtained access to the HEC files, published the *Pedder Papers* which revealed that deceits and dishonesties were commonplace within the powerful Hydro-Electric Commission.<sup>3</sup> It also revealed that the HEC had plans which would destroy the magnificent Franklin River (more about that later).

Downstream the dam was filling up. Then, at the eleventh hour, hope appeared in the form of a new left-wing federal Government, led by Gough Whitlam. The Whitlam Government set up a National Inquiry.<sup>4</sup> Its recommendation was for a moratorium on the drowning and, further, that the Commonwealth pick up the bill for all costs. It is uncertain whether that offer was in fact formally communicated to Premier Reece, but if so, it was refused. In 1972, Lake Pedder was drowned to produce only 170 megawatts (less than that used by Tasmania's one aluminium smelter).<sup>5</sup> It was later learned that the electricity was not needed. The HEC secretly arranged to sell power to the smelter at below cost.<sup>6</sup> Only the top 15 percent of the new lake would be used at all. (The flooding could have been avoided by a smaller storage area and tunnel upstream.) The drowning of Lake Pedder was a tragedy felt very deeply by all sentient Tasmanians. Some lives were changed forever.

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<sup>1</sup> Kiernan, 1985, *above* at p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Hungerford, 1983, *above* at p. 140-141; Kiernan, *above* at p. 21

<sup>3</sup> Keith McKenry, 1972, *The Pedder Papers* (Melbourne: ACF).

<sup>4</sup> Lake Pedder Committee of Enquiry, 1974, *Final Report* (Canberra: Australian Government Publisher).

<sup>5</sup> Bob Brown, 1985, "Crucible of the Elements", in Bob Brown et al., *Lake Pedder*, *above* at p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Bob Brown, 1985, *above* at p. 13.

## The Franklin

The greens, determined that Lake Pedder would not be lost in vain, began digging in for the fight to save the Franklin River. In 1976, years after the scheme was hatched, the HEC publicly revealed two alternative proposals, one of which would flood the Franklin while the other (the Olga scheme) would flood the Denison Valley and the Gordon Splits. As far as the burgeoning green movement was concerned, the Olga scheme was the 'bad' option, and the Franklin scheme was even worse.

The odds of stopping a dam seemed impossible. The HEC's power was enormous and had always prevailed in the past. When the Labor Party of Doug Lowe came to power, it tried to institute administrative and bureaucratic reform, central to which was the bringing of the HEC under direct ministerial control. The attempt failed. When Andrew Lohrey, the new Minister of Resources and Energy was deposed, he complained he had been actively undermined and 'disinformed' by the HEC.<sup>1</sup>

The prevailing attitude of the HEC bureaucracy was such that when a poll in 1980 showed that 46 percent of Tasmanians opposed the flooding of the Franklin, the Commissioner remarked on television: "If the Parliament tries to work through popular decisions, we're doomed in the state and doomed everywhere". The HEC was a government instrumentality fighting the decisions of the government, its employer, and using public money to do so.

Despite HEC and union opposition, threats of power rationing and economic ruin, the Lowe Labor Government tried to compromise by rejecting the 'Franklin' scheme for the compromise 'Olga' one. But the highly conservative Upper House then voted to amend the Olga bill in favour of the Franklin scheme. The Labor Government refused to reconsider. There was a stalemate. The dominant concern at the time was not environmental or economic considerations - but the desire on the part of the government to be seen as decisive, masculine and in control. As several community leaders were heard (by the writer) to say: "a bad decision is better than no decision at all".

Finally, the Government decided to escape the impasse by holding a public referendum, but it was to have only two options: the Franklin or the Olga scheme. Premier Lowe then stated he would include a 'no dam' option. However, he lost a no confidence motion and resigned from the Party to sit on the cross bench with lone Australian Democrat Norm Sanders. They were joined by Party Whip, Mary Willey, who also resigned. Remarkably, the ensuing 1981 referendum had a 33 percent write in for 'No Dams' and a total of 45 percent invalidated votes. Such was without precedent in Australian history.

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<sup>1</sup> Personal communication. See Douglas Ackley Lowe, 1984, *The Price of Power: The Politics behind the Tasmanian Dams Case* (Melbourne: MacMillan) pp.86-8.

In March 1982, the cross bench brought a no-confidence motion against the new Labor Premier, Harry Holgate, over the dams issue, precipitating an election that saw the pro-HEC Liberals, led by Robin Gray, elected in a landslide. The new Liberal Government proceeded to revoke part of the Wild Rivers National Park that the Lowe government had declared, and vested it in the HEC. They then started a national advertizing campaign in support of the dam, and skilfully transformed the issue into one of 'state's rights'.

Although the federal Government, also Liberal, had nominated the South West Wilderness area for the World Heritage List, and despite the discovery of ancient Aboriginal cave sites, it refused to stop the dam. There was no state or federal option left. The Wilderness Society launched the non-violent river blockade. This gradually drew ever more widespread community support. In total, it involved 4,000 participants and over 1,200 were arrested, including celebrities like television personality David Bellamy from the United Kingdom. In early 1983, with the acknowledged aid of the green movement, the Labor Party won the federal election. Prime Minister Hawke then prohibited HEC activities in the World Heritage Area - a decision upheld by the High Court of Australia on July 1st, 1983.

The HEC later admitted its demand projections had been hugely inflated and that the Franklin dam had not been needed when predicted. Today the HEC has lost both its credibility and hegemony. But that was not the happy ending. That was only the happy beginning. In 1983, the spokesperson of the Franklin campaign, and now international figure, Dr. Bob Brown, had gotten into state Parliament by filling a casual vacancy caused by the resignation of Australian Democrat Norm Sanders. (Dr. Sanders later became a federal Senator). When they had the recount to determine Sanders' successor, Bob Brown was in gaol, having been arrested at the blockade. In 1986, Dr. Brown was joined in Parliament by another Green,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gerry Bates, a lecturer in environmental law.

That battle of the Franklin ended, attention turned to the destruction caused by the woodchip industry. In 1986 peaceful protests in defence of native forests resulted in arrests when protesters blocked two large excavators from crossing Farmhouse Creek in the south of Tasmania, while in the north others blocked a bulldozer in the Lemonthyme forest. Rallies, petitions and blockades were finally heard by the federal government, and Prime Minister Hawke moved to protect National Estate forests. A Helsham Inquiry was established by the Commonwealth to determine which areas should be protected pursuant to an international Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. When the report came down in May 1988, two of the three commissioners sided with the forest industry. Nonetheless, Hawke moved to protect about half of the disputed forests.

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<sup>1</sup> I capitalize 'Green' when referring to the mainstream political or parliamentary wing of the movement, staff and entourage, as distinguished from the amorphous, grassroots movement.

The temporary defence of the Lemnathyme and part of the Southern Forests imparted a sense of optimism. Another threat was looming however. In 1988 came the Wesley Vale Pulp Mill proposal by the mainland company North Broken Hill (NBH) and its venture partner from Canada, Noranda.

### **Wesley Vale**

The greens had bested the Tasmanian HEC, but were they ready for transnational corporations? The outcome of the Wesley Vale project was crucial to both green and development interests because it would be the test case that could set the environmental control standards for 16 other mills in various stages of planning for Australia. But the greens were caught unawares. They had been arguing for down-stream processing for years, and the proposal was for a one billion dollar pulp mill that would allegedly create 400 permanent jobs. Consequently, the alarm was first raised by a local group called CROPS, led by Christine Milne, whose initial aim was only to prevent it from being located in prime agricultural land - their back yard.

CROPS' opposition may have been greater, had they not been misled by the company into believing the site had not yet been decided. Gradually, issues other than the loss of prime farm land became apparent, such as the \$45 million infrastructure to be paid by taxpayers, the 60 million litres daily of polluting effluent, and royalties of \$11 million as compared to predicted profits of up to \$150 million to be taken out of the state annually. Also, the adequacy of the timber resource base and impact on the forest ecology was unclear, yet all too clear. The greens soon began to see the pulp mill as a giant, fuming, tree-gorging dragon. In 1988, the Gray Government formally announced support for the site at Wesley Vale, subject to certain conditions concerning environmental standards, royalties and so forth. Noranda of Canada was to be the venture partner of NBH, and a customer for the pulp.

Throughout the unfolding saga the company would insist that chlorine bleaching was necessary for the world market. And throughout, the state Government would assure everyone the project would bring jobs, and that environmental standards would be the most stringent in the world. This created a dilemma that greens often face. One cannot 'prove' government and industry promises about the future are false. Gradually, however, both government and industry lost credibility. Let us see why.

First, ironically, North Broken Hill's Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS, although clearly intended as a promotional document, was so inadequate and misleading that it raised more questions than it answered. For example, it scarcely mentioned dioxins, which had been the major issue surrounding pulp mills overseas. The greens exploited this by finding many overseas and local experts to attest to its inadequacies. The company found a scientific expert from Sweden to support the project, but it was discovered that he had a pecuniary interest.

Considerable disquiet was caused by the portrayal of Noranda's environmental record in Canada; the greens were cheered by letters of support from Canadian fishermen. And, a report by the state Government's own Department of Seas and Inland Fisheries blasting the EIS was conveniently leaked.

The Government's claims that the mill would bring 400 permanent jobs and 1,500 during construction also lacked credibility. After all, similar promises concerning job creation (and pollution control) that had been made in respect of the Electrona Silicon Smelter in southern Tasmania had since proven untrue. (It was later to close, having cost millions in public subsidies.) In response to public concern, the government prepared guidelines for environmental controls - but these guidelines were wide open to 'interpretation' and were published only two days before the parliamentary sitting, so there was no time for public comment.

In November, 1988, Green Independent Parliamentarian Dr. Gerry Bates pointed out that the developers were ignoring an international agreement banning the dumping of chlorine at sea with a pipeline. The state Parliament had passed the Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1987, *absolutely prohibiting* the dumping of organohalogen compounds (which include organochlorine wastes), cadmium and mercury. The new pulp mill would send 1.3 tonnes of prohibited chemicals each day into Bass Strait. NBH countered that it did not violate the agreement because a pipeline is not a "vessel, aircraft, platform or other man-made structure" as the legislation specifies.<sup>1</sup>

About this time an interesting thing began to happen. The growing lack of credibility, and growing public concern over pollution, began to drive a wedge between the developer and state Government. The Government had to look tough on pollution because it appeared to many that the company was dictating the terms. On the other hand, NBH had thought that the politics of the matter had ended with the Agreement of 1988, and that other issues, such as royalties and environmental standards, would be routine. Also, NBH was under pressure from Noranda and other overseas pulp manufacturers to keep the lid on the environmental standards for future investment and their impact on other governments, such as Canada's.

With both parties having to look tough, they began public posturing. NBH kept threatening to pull out. Premier Gray issued a statement saying he would not be 'intimidated' by the company into accepting its terms. NBH complained the guidelines were impossible to meet. The state Minister for the Environment locked himself in by saying that the company must accept the guidelines 'as is' or scrap the project. Then, right in the midst of this crisis, government and developer went off to a resort together for a week of steamy, torrid,

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<sup>1</sup> *Examiner*, 29 Nov. 1988.

'negotiations'. After a week, they emerged looking very satisfied, saying that a good deal had been 'consummated'. That deal was a document 'interpreting' the guidelines of 1988.

Parliament was recalled to give legislative status to the interpretative document. (Incidentally, the announcement to recall Parliament was made - not by the Premier - but on company stationary by the company's public relations adviser, who had previously been the Director of the Premier's private office: a mistake the mill's opponents did not fail to exploit.) The Premier gave Parliament an ultimatum: Parliament, he declared, could 'consider' the document, but not change it. Dissent was loud and immediate, with the federal Minister for the Environment claiming a backdown over the guidelines. This was clearly the case. There were many changes which would, among other things, have effectively removed liability for any resulting environmental damage from the company.

With the new state/company Agreement of 1989, conflict now moved to the national level. Because of Noranda of Canada's investment, the final decision rested with the Foreign Investment Review Board. But this was a big problem, because the project would mean \$300 million in earned income to assist the massive overseas trade deficit. In fact, the project was worth more financially to the Commonwealth than to the state. A showdown was looming. It now became clear that the Commonwealth could not let *political* considerations 'be seen to' affect their decision, as this would jeopardize the 16 other possible pulp mill projects. Moreover, the Government could not 'be seen to' be courting green votes. There was only one way the proposal could be rejected - on scientific grounds.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, a group called USERP (United Scientists for Environmental Responsibility and Protection) was being formed as a conduit for scientists who felt they could not speak out publicly, or needed support if they did. John Kerin, the federal Minister for Primary Industries, could not ignore the concerns of gainfully employed scientists. He announced he would conduct a scientific evaluation to ensure there would be no damage to the marine environment, nor risk to Australian exports from chemical discharges. (Many existing large industries, municipalities and government departments in Tasmania were exceeding allowable pollution standards under state Ministerial exemptions.)<sup>1</sup> That evaluation found the EIS to be distorted and grossly inadequate to predict environmental impacts. In the event, the Commonwealth decided that the conditions of the 1989 Act were not tough enough, and NBH pulled out. It was argued at the time that this was probably due to extraneous market reasons.

Shortly thereafter, in May 1989, Three additional Green Independents (Di Hollister, Christine Milne and Lance Armstrong) obtained seats in state Parliament. Neither Liberal nor Labor Party had a majority, so the Greens began to negotiate with both parties about forming a

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<sup>1</sup> *Examiner*, 12 Sept. 1991.

government. Then the Liberals, who had more members in Parliament, suddenly refused to negotiate with the Greens, under pressure from their implacably anti-green backbench.

In the event, the Green Independents signed an 'Accord' with Labor. This was a unique agreement by which Labor would hold power (though having only 33 percent of the vote), provided certain policy proposals were adopted. But defeated Premier Gray refused to resign, postponing the opening of Parliament as long as possible (about a month). Coincidentally, someone was arranging for a Labor backbencher to cross the floor and join the Liberals so that the Greens and Labor would not have the numbers to form a government. As it turned out, the failed bribe attempt was masterminded by the media mogul, Edmund Rouse (once quoted as having said Tasmania is a "great place to rape").<sup>1</sup> Rouse served about 18 months of a 3 year sentence. Robin Gray, as it later emerged, was considered by the Commission to be "evasive and dishonest" with police,<sup>2</sup> and to have probably been a party to the bribery attempt, though it felt there was insufficient evidence to warrant a trial.<sup>3</sup>

Alas, those were the good old days. June 30, 1988 had marked the end of an eight year moratorium on logging rainforests; it was now time to decide how to divide them up. This meant trouble, and trouble could no longer be avoided by porkbarreling through secret negotiations with industry. Any environmental decisions would upset *both* industry and greens. Thus, when conflict emerged once more over the forests, the new Labor Government arranged for the representatives of industry and environmental groups to meet around the same table, in the absence of politicians.

The issue was a saw log shortage resulting from a lack of roads. This came about because the Forestry Commission had a priority on building roads to areas with high national estate values. These areas had been withdrawn from timber production following the Helsham Inquiry (established by the Commonwealth to determine which areas should be protected pursuant to an international Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage). In these negotiations, greens identified accessible short-term supplies of logs for sawmills from degraded National Estate forests in return for the inclusion of more wilderness on the World Heritage List. This settlement was called the 'Salamanca Agreement', after the historic setting (the Salamanca Inn in Hobart) where the negotiations took place.

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<sup>1</sup> Reported by Bob Burton, research officer for the Wilderness Society, who heard Rouse say this in a public forum.

<sup>2</sup> *Examiner*, 6 November 1991, p.1.

<sup>3</sup> Carter, W. J. 1991, *Report of the Royal Commission into an Attempt to Bribe a Member of the House of Assembly; and Other Matters* (Hobart: Government Printers).



## Resource Security Legislation

The apparent success of this Salamanca dispute management process led to the formation of a Forest and Forest Industry Council, or FFIC, composed of representatives of the same groups that had been involved at Salamanca Place. The FFIC set up a joint problem-solving process to develop a strategy for the future of Tasmania's forests. At the cost of about \$10 million in (federal) taxpayers' funds, the greens thought they had made the big league. In particular, the FFIC was to determine which areas could be logged during the transition to full reliance on plantations and regrowth forests. The only catch was that the greens' estimate of how long this transition should take was 5 years while industry wanted at least 20, which would allow for the consumption of virtually all unprotected old growth forests.

Similarly to the Helsham inquiry, a community consultation process (called RAGs) was set up to recommend areas of state-owned forests for protection. Many of these areas were found to be of high conservation value by the FFIC's "balanced panel of experts", but the findings were ignored in the Forest strategy, and many smaller areas were not even looked at. The participatory process managed to by-pass what industry saw as the green leadership, though it also began to empower numerous other greens at the periphery.

But while the greens were laying their cards on the table, the deck was being stacked. The Forestry Commission and industry were formulating the draconian 'Resource Security Legislation', or RSL, which would come to be known in some circles as 'Resource Robbery Legislation'. This scheme would place 1.4 million hectares of Tasmanian forests *irretrievably* into an industrial zone for "mixed use" logging (the greens were told 1.1).

The greens negotiated for many months until, at the last minute and despite the agreement to use *consensus* decision making, the surprise industry package was put on the table and ratified by majority vote. It would increase the woodchip export quota. Thereupon, the green negotiators refused to sign, but were deliberate about 'not walking out'. In the months to come, this would serve as 'proof' that greens did not believe in consensus and cooperation. The greens were also accused of being unreasonable when they 'broke the Accord' after the Labor Government violated its terms by, among other things, raising the export quota on woodchips. Keeping royalties low and raising the export quota meant the big companies would not move to plantations, as native forests were plentiful and cheap. It also meant NBH through its local arm APPM would not buy the small sawmillers' waste wood, although the main argument for woodchipping had always been precisely to prevent such waste. According to one sawmiller, APPM kept telling them to bulldoze and burn their scrap wood.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Examiner*, 30 Sept. 1991. Letter to the editor by local sawmiller, Geoff Head, complaining that for 10 years, in response to their attempts to sell APPM their waste wood, sawmillers have been told to "bulldoze this waste timber into heaps and burn it".

The RSL was designed to "strike a balance between conservation and development" and resolve environmental conflict in Tasmania once and for all. How could any reasonable person oppose it? In fact, the balanced approach was taken quite literally: roughly *half* the public forests were to be privatized. (But then again, since almost half the state's forests have disappeared since settlement, perhaps by that logic Tasmania has been sufficiently 'balanced' already?) Tasmania's rainforests were also to be thrown into the balance, with the unlucky half going to the chainsaws. (Tasmania's rainforests are about a third of Australia's total.) Moreover, the definition of rainforest is highly exclusive, so that rainforests with a small percentage of gums (over 5 percent) are called 'mixed forests' and receive less protection.

With the industrial zones non-negotiable, it came to light that almost 10 percent of the forests earmarked for industrial use had been recommended for World Heritage listing by the state's own Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage, but the report recommending this was suppressed for six months while the boundaries of the so-called 'wood production zones' were being drawn up.

The RSL was really the old concession system,<sup>1</sup> but in a new comprehensive scheme. Traditionally, zoning has been a means of protecting public amenities, health and safety, and other local property interests. In Tasmania's Crown forests, zoning was now given a new meaning: giving public resources to offshore interests. The property rights would be for ever. The RSL, as then proposed, would prevent rezoning forest areas from wood production to other uses by requiring approval of both Houses of Parliament. But, as everyone knew, the Upper House, the infamous Legislative Council, would never side with forest protection, if only because the hated greens were for it.

The Green parliamentarians were caught between a rock and a hard place. Over the following months they repeatedly stated that they would, with the Liberals' undoubted support, bring about an election if the RSL gave the Legislative Council veto power over national parks or put 1.1 million hectares of forest into a wood production zone. But the Greens knew a Liberal Government could do even worse, and certainly hoped to.

On top of this, the state government and industry were pushing the Commonwealth to fetter its powers over World Heritage, foreign investment, export duties and so forth (which enable the Commonwealth to influence land use in the states) by enacting a federal RSL. In February, 1991, Prime Minister Hawke announced that RSL on the part of the Commonwealth was unnecessary, in an apparent attempt to hijack federal Cabinet debate on the issue which was scheduled for March. The Cabinet nonetheless approved a limited RSL scheme which would guarantee resources for individual projects based on volume, rather than particular forests. The

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<sup>1</sup> Under the concession system, resource extractors were given the rights to the forests on a given area of land by Act of Parliament.

stated objective was to phase out export woodchips by allowing pulp mills. Hawke's following industry statement also promised not to use federal powers over export licenses to stop a pulp mill or other politically sensitive resource development. This was called the 'new federalism'.

Later that same month, the Saddler Report into the economics of the forest industry was published.<sup>1</sup> It confirmed that the industry was inefficient, heavily subsidized and provided few benefits to Tasmanians in comparison with other investments. It also confirmed that the royalties on wood did not cover the operating cost of the Forestry Commission. Along with other experts, such as Mary O'Brien of Canada, and Randal O'Toole of the United States, Saddler had showed that Tasmanians were paying the Forest Industry to cart away their forests. Each Tasmanian on average pays \$177 per year in subsidies to the forest industry, largely to service the Forestry Commission debt incurred by successive Governments - now \$500 million and rising by \$80 million per year.<sup>2</sup> The Government had placed the Forestry Commission's debt into consolidated revenue, thereby making the problem disappear.

Subsidizing big industry has always been a way of life in Tasmania. The Electrona Smelter, for example, was subsidized by an incredible \$19 million over 70 years (not counting untold environmental costs), and yet was to close its doors.<sup>3</sup> Paying people to lean on shovels would be a lot cheaper. But the pulp mill would be different! Premier Field assured everyone his Government would *not* subsidize the promised pulp mill. Unlike the previous Gray Government and the Commonwealth - each of which had offered \$25 million in roads and other subsidies the pulp mill developers<sup>4</sup> - Field would just incorporate those infrastructure costs into the state's normal road building priorities or build "tourist roads for a pulp mill", as Green Independent Christine Milne put it.<sup>5</sup>

The dilemma for the greens was that most people did not want to know what the RSL was about. This time 'to dam or not to dam' was not the question. The forestry issue was complex and confusing; the local press was not much help. With the recession growing in 1991, it was easy to feed the mythical behemoth of trees versus people, or forests versus jobs. Since the 1970s, 100 small sawmills had closed and 5,000 jobs in the forest industries had been lost due to the policies of the big companies.<sup>6</sup> Yet, even as 1800 workers were being retrenched by

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<sup>1</sup> Hugh Saddler, 1991, *Forestry as if Economics Mattered. A Study of the Economics of the Tasmanian Forestry Industry* (Hobart: Goshawk Publications).

<sup>2</sup> Saddler, 1991, *above* at p. 101.

<sup>3</sup> "7:30" report, ABC-TV, 24 February, 1992.

<sup>4</sup> Bob Brown, by letter. The press reported \$23 million.

<sup>5</sup> *Examiner*, 9 May 1991.

<sup>6</sup> See generally, Hugh Saddler, 1991, *above*.

APPM due to a slump in the world paper market, the only solution presented was to chop down more forests to supply a pulp mill which would mean a net loss of 800 jobs (as the old labour-intensive mill would close).

Another promise of the RSL was employment security, although this was to be resolved later in case-by-case negotiations, not by legislation. As if this did not offer enough security *from* employees, APPM began to rationalize the industry to enhance their bargaining position before the legislation passed. First, they tried to reduce the truckers' cartage rates. This precipitated a blockade of the Triabunna woodchip mill by log trucks. Since logs could not be processed, 220 bush and mill workers were subsequently stood down by the company. The strike ended three weeks later when APPM agreed to drop threatened legal action which the union and drivers could not afford. Nothing could deter union loyalty in their co-dependent relationship with industry, however. They continued to reiterate their faith in the company's RSL, in hopes that the company would provide jobs until the cheap forests were gone. Little did they know that the following year, the company would launch a full-scale assault on the union.

Throughout 1991, the introduction of the legislation into Parliament seemed to stall in unison with postponements in the publication of the one million dollar Rouse Royal Commission Report. (Rouse's fine was \$4 thousand). The RSL was now due in the October 1991 session of Parliament. Signs of a breakthrough occurred in August, when Labor proposed an independent commission to decide on rezoning forests, which would effectively by-pass the Legislative Council. This was seen by the press as appeasement of conservationists, or weakness.

Shortly after, the Greens published an alternative RSL. Under this scheme, sawmillers would sell to the highest bidder: tenders would be based on volume with a reserve price; mills would be limited to a maximum of 20 percent of sustainable yield; and pulpmills would have to buy residue from sawmills. The press dismissed the legislation as an ambit claim for negotiations with government and a means to attain pre-election publicity. There was no serious response to the proposal. Alternatives, such as using hemp for paper instead of wood were not even allowed on the political agenda.

About this time also, a federal Resource Assessment Commission report came out, recommending an increased export tax on woodchips because, in the words of one of the authors, Japanese buyers had been getting woodchips too cheap for too long.<sup>1</sup> But along with the many previous expert reports, this too was ignored. After all, the point of the RSL was only to allow investment in a local export pulp mill for 'downstream processing' by offshore

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<sup>1</sup> *Mercury*, 13 September, 1991.

interests, and, if Tasmanians were going to continue to pay these interests to take their wood, why should the rate or cost of forest depletion concern them?

Then the greens prayers were answered, or so they thought. On September 9th, the Head of Noranda (NBH's venture partner from Canada), admitted publicly that a pulp mill in Tasmania was unlikely, because the world market situation was "absolutely awful". He added it would be "a matter of years, a considerable number of years, before the situation improves".<sup>1</sup> The lack of a mill could have given Premier Field a way to wiggle out of an election over the RSL but it was not to be. Field adamantly reasserted the need for the RSL, saying it was not about a pulp mill but about encouraging investment in the state. It is difficult to follow this reasoning. After all, the previous concession system, or other resource guarantees on a case-by-case basis, already provided investment security. As a source close to the Government revealed, the real reason was a desire to win back the hardhat, 'anti-greenie' vote. RSL would also make it difficult to reclassify state forests as National Parks and World Heritage areas.

As the showdown drew near, the Greens offered a compromise. They would allow Labor to stay in power if the RSL did not contain the 200,000 hectares that the panel of experts had found to be of high conservation value; if the guaranteed wood supply was based on area, not volume; it did not give the Legislative Council power over which forests were to be axed; and the Government made NBH guarantee a pulp mill before they were given forests. But to no avail. Then, on September 17th, 1991, Cabinet approved the RSL package, giving the Greens a copy just one hour before making it public. Field said the RSL was non-negotiable and would be introduced when Parliament resumed in October. The parliamentary opposition, being gifted speed readers came out the next day with strong support for the RSL. The Greens, on the other hand, spent weeks studying it and conferring with local support groups. With a heavy heart, they again renewed their promise to "take the government to the people". High noon was upon the forests.

Was it worth such a gamble? Let us review some of the things the RSL would do. Essentially, it allows Tasmanian native forests to be chipped before Third World plantations are ready to "harvest". The RSL would create industrial zones containing now 1.4 million hectares forests with another 350,000 deferred forests; 20 percent of Tasmania, or 1.7 million hectares, would go to the chainsaws. Endangered species, tourist potential and aboriginal sites would be lost forever. 22 percent of Tasmania would remain protected until resource scarcity drove up their 'productive' value (whereupon they will again most probably be balanced in half).

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<sup>1</sup> *Mercury*, 7 September, 1991.

To remove forests from these zones, the Cabinet would have to refer the issue to an advisory body, the Public Land Use Commission, or PLUC, (to be set up under separate legislation) and then accept its recommendation. Public input into the PLUC processes would be limited, and its terms of reference would be set in legislation based on the FFIC guidelines rather than by, say, the Environment Minister. Parliament could reject the Commission's reports, but the federal Government could then override the state and implement the Commission's proposals. However, the PLUC could only initiate an inquiry into forest allocation if "new facts" were discovered. This meant that 200,000 hectares of forest that the FFIC's panel of experts' found had high conservation value could not be taken out of the industrial zone, as their findings would be "old facts". Under RSL, the mechanism for removing forests from the extermination camps was complex and full of pitfalls. In fact, to save forests the public would probably have to pay compensation to the private companies for land the companies got for free - as had happened in Canada.

Some further problems. The much touted employment provisions would require the Forestry Commission to consider employment when deciding between competing claims for Crown wood, which the RSL would not enforce. All forested public lands not in reserves would become state forests under the control of the Forestry Commission. It would have increased police powers to forcibly remove the public from their former forests. Wood supply agreements would still be negotiated in secret between the major companies and the Forestry Commission (300,000 cubic metres of sawlogs and veneer logs) which, according to USERP scientists, was highly unsustainable. Tasmania's old growth forests would be completely gone in 10 years. In sum, the RSL meant that, by law, Tasmania's wonderful native forests were doomed.

All in all, the gamble seemed worth it - at the time. The Liberal Party could win an election and they promised to do worse. (During their seven years in office in the 1980s, the Liberals had reduced the amount of protected forests by 18,000 hectares.) They would give the Legislative Council veto power over any future national parks, and would amend the National Parks and Wildlife Act to make it harder to allocate land for conservation than for mineral or timber extraction. However, the timely report of the Carter Commission, implicating the Liberal leader in the bribery scandal, gave some hope. The Greens were at a loss, and were being pulled apart by internal grass-roots dissent. Choosing principle over pragmatism, on October 3rd the Greens reiterated their threat to bring a no-confidence motion. But the Government 'stood tall', and ruled out any compromise.

Labor and Greens decided to allow debate on the bill, to put the Liberals in the position of hypocrites: supporting a no-confidence motion based on legislation they endorsed. Labor also needed time for the \$50,000 forest publicity campaign to take effect, as their own coffers were almost empty, and there had been another delay in the Carter Royal Commission's bribery

inquiry. The Greens likewise decided to allow debate on the bill before the no-confidence motion to put the Liberals in the position of supporting the Bill. But as Liberal Leader Robin Gray had easily survived allegations of boozing, womanizing, lying and thieving, trying to expose Liberals on the finer points of scruples was, in retrospect, perhaps a bit optimistic.

To the general public, the obscurity of the forestry issue meant that the Liberals could make stable government the key issue. Premier Field, on the other hand, insisted that those who opposed the RSL were simply against 'balance'. After all, the delirium with which industry groups greeted the legislation was certainly equalled by the horror expressed among environmentalists.

The day came. On October 31, 1991, the RSL was introduced. The Greens had indicated to Field that their no-confidence motion would be phrased in such a way as to give him a way out. After an exchange of notes between Field and Brown, Field left Parliament to advise the Governor of the new ball game. The no-confidence motion was based on RSL *only*, and since he withdrew the legislation, the Greens allowed Labor to finish out the remaining 18 month term.

The Greens could not contain their glee and made the mistake of appearing too pleased. The Forest Industry came down hard on Field and he caved. Within the fortnight, Field reintroduced the RSL attached to another bill, thereby making it the required 50 percent different from the original (to qualify as a different bill). This, of course, was portrayed as outfoxing the Greens, not breaking their word. The Liberals then agreed to pass the 'new' legislation and to not support a no-confidence motion until after December 25th. It was done. The RSL passed on the 13th of November.

Meanwhile, the Royal Commission's adverse findings about opposition Leader Robin Gray came down, but the Liberal MPs stood faithfully behind him; that is, until Gray went on holiday in December. He was then replaced by Ray Groom, a well-mannered and plausible individual, but whose record as Minister for Forests under a previous Government was, in the greens' view, deplorable. On the last day of Parliament in December, Field stated that Parliament would not resume for several months. Just after the holidays, however, he called an election for February 1st, 1992. The Government was defeated emphatically, while the Greens lost votes but not seats. There are now only 11 Labor and 5 Greens as against 19 Liberals, and the transnational woodchip companies rule.

### Postscript

For about three months in early 1992, the greens prevented the construction of a road in native forest that had once been protected as a National Park. During the blockade, local rednecks fire-bombed two of the protester's cars. The police apparently knew who had done it, but did not press charges. In response to the peaceful protest, legislation recently passed

through the Tasmanian House of Assembly and Legislative Council that will mean anyone protesting the destruction of Tasmania's forests (and economy) on Crown land can be fined up to twenty thousand dollars or serve up to 12 months in gaol.



## APPENDIX 2: ECOFEMINIST PRAXIS

### 'A guide to growing greenies organically'

Ecofeminist praxis is a matter of individual choice. The following is a specific example.

Home-grown, organic playgardens integrate structures designed to facilitate exploratory, imaginative, and interactive play with plants, trees, and the natural features of the site. This encourages children to develop positive early experiences *in* nature, even though they may be confined to urban settings. Such botanical exploratoriums encourage the appreciation of nature, and stand in stark contrast to traditional Patriarchal playgrounds which mould children (like the corporate system moulds adult society) into relationships that are competitive, non-self reliant, and disconnected from nature.

This essay answers the question: why it is that when a group of parents, motivated only by concern for child development and a sense of community, join together to build an innocuous little community play environment, they are so often met with derision, hostility, and occasionally even blatant sabotage from officials, bureaucrats, and businessmen who seem bent on proving "it can't be done"? One might expect these people to take a paternalistic or helpful attitude toward women and children. In my experience, however, it is those who harbour the most Patriarchal attitudes that oppose play environments most virulently.

After years of doggedly bearing witness to the tribulations of community-built playgrounds, I believe I know why. Creative play environments symbolize all that is devalued in a Patriarchal/capitalist culture. They speak to: women's and children's (non-material) needs; unstructured learning and unsupervised play; shared public open space and a sense of community; and art and nature that is not partitioned-off from community life. Thus, creative play environments, and what I consider to be their pure form, 'playgardens', can be seen as metaphors for the feminine principle.

Moreover, the *process* of building them can itself be a community-building activity which promotes local self-reliance, group decision-making, and personal empowerment among the parents who build them. In both content and process, therefore, a little playgarden project can strike at the very heart of Patriarchy, which is based on dominance relationships and control over nature and Other. In fact, the local playgarden project can be a veritable 'Trojan Horse' for challenging the dominant, anti-environment paradigm.

It may seem fanciful to suggest that playgardens could be a vehicle for social change. After all, in a time of global catastrophe, building play environments in the comforts of Australia,

Canada, or the United States pales somewhat in comparison to the suffering of men and women of the Third World - some of whom have even been murdered in their attempts to defend the natural environment. But it is here where the *sources* of their problems are to be found; it is here where things must be put right. And nowhere does merely 'talking' open the closed Patriarchal consciousness that permits the systemic abuse of power.

Changing that mentality requires direct action on all levels, the personal and political. Contrary to appearances, home-grown playgardens and similar community-based projects can be a form of *direct action* that has more potency and depth than 'radical' demonstrations or marches. A few blades of grass can sometimes do more to dislodge concrete than a thousand marching feet. Compare, for example, a small community-based project with a protest at a military base. The protest brings media attention to the issue and confronts the soldiers themselves; it is symbolic, educative, and enables the participants to make a personal statement. But while play environment projects do not make sensational media events, they, in contrast, enter deep into the very fabric of the community. They reach people that can still 'turn off' the news. The difficult reality is that true social change cannot happen without face-to-face communication *within* the community.

In this essay I will show that there *is* opposition to play environments (and it is greater in a place where Patriarchy rules); that the reasons given for opposing play environments, such as legal liability and cost, do not stand up to fact or reason; and that the reasons for this opposition are non-rational, and relate to the male-dominated system of social relations and values. I will also suggest why such community-based projects represent a genuine threat to Patriarchy. But the value of playgardens is not just as a locus for community activism. They are also a breeding ground for the next generation of 'greenies' and, potentially, a model for a community environment that is in harmony with non-human nature and the 'feminine principle'.

Patriarchal attitudes toward creative play environments and playgardens become more awesome if we compare their benefits to the community with their relative cost - that is, by using Patriarchal standards of measurement. Let us first look at the importance of free play in the social development of the child and community.

### **The importance of play**

It is necessary to distinguish three types of play environments which I will call playgrounds, creative play environments, and playgardens. By 'playgrounds', I mean the traditional slides, swings, forts, and multi-functional playstructures. 'Creative play environments' include all outdoor environments designed to facilitate 'free' (or exploratory and imaginative) play. 'Playgardens' are creative play environments that are functionally integrated with the landscape and vegetation. In a playgarden, structures serve as inconspicuous props

for children in their explorations of nature and of their capabilities in relation to the environment.

Although creative play environments and playgardens are quite different from traditional playgrounds, androcentric (male-centred) bureaucracies are often categorically against all three. This is partly because they cannot distinguish between them anyway. For example, I once read the results of a research project which observed children's preference for playing on traditional playgrounds (eg. swings and slides) as compared to the so-called 'modern' multi-function playstructure. From this, they concluded that the traditional equipment was 'preferred' over more 'progressive' designs. But the multi-functional playstructure is usually, in fact, the traditional playground concept with only a slight structural modification. These structures merely connect different items of traditional equipment onto one climbing framework - the activity itself is not integrated. To put it another way, if something is categorized as a progressive playground it must be different than a traditional one, despite the play patterns and relationships dictated by the design.

Similarly, problems experienced with commercial equipment or badly-designed play environments are attributed categorically to all play environments, including custom-designed ones. Remarkably, however, I have found most mothers, and parenting fathers, do not have this perceptual handicap. Perhaps it is because they are able to empathize, or to imagine how children would behave in different physical contexts. During their parenting years at least, they see the world from the wide eyes of the child, rather than the linear vision of the adult.

Of course, despite the presumed 'worthlessness' of play, traditional and commercial playgrounds do continue to get built with some regularity. In my experience, however, the reason men's service clubs build playgrounds is because they get continual requests, and because they are an inexpensive way of showing tangible evidence of their activity in the community. Likewise, the reason municipal bureaucrats build playgrounds is because parents and large playground companies lobby for them.

But while traditional playgrounds continue to be built, they do not reflect our knowledge of the importance of play in child, family, and community development. Look at traditional Patriarchal playgrounds in the context of human development. Their design bears little relation to the needs of children, parents, or community. These playgrounds are not environments to explore, but a mere catalogue of equipment, such as bars, seesaws and slides, scattered around at random with no relationship between them or the site. The pattern is the same throughout the world. Whether of wood or metal, such playgrounds are invariably cold, barren and isolated. Beyond this, they shape a play experience that is one-dimensional: the resultant activity is constricted and segregated from other activities, from other children, from non-human nature, and from the broader community. In short, playgrounds reflect the 19th Century view that play is a separate, isolated activity with no social relevance or value.

## Playgardens and their benefits

In our Western culture, vegetation and landscaping is generally perceived of as a meaningless 'backdrop' for human activity. This disassociation of nature and humans is reversed in an organic playgarden. Playgardens not only bring nature back into the human habitat, they situate child development back where it belongs - in the natural environment. Organic playgardens can establish a 'natural' play environment where before there was only paving or left-over space. There is a complex of structures and spaces to explore, creating an efficient use of land (which is increasingly scarce in developed areas).

Although playgardens may have decks, posts, and equipment as required to promote physical exercise and social interaction, the structures are made inconspicuous to blend in with the plants and landscaping. In contrast, hard-edged Patriarchal architecture symbolizes Man's aspiration to distance himself from nature and the feminine. Playgardens are a small symbol of what a 'feminist' environment would be - one physically and aesthetically integrated with the living environment. Playgardens potentially help to reintroduce children and play back into the social life of the community as well. Creative work is play.

Patriarchy is stuffy: imagine a living environment where opportunities for spontaneity and fun are functionally integrated with structures for daily living. Although perhaps too literal an example, I have a 90 foot long slide (made from two parallel water pipes) for quick access from my house to the garden below. It serves the additional purpose of getting my children down into the garden more often. We could do far more to develop public places (bus stops, airports, nature strips and street furniture) for dual social uses, such as exercise circuits for kids and parents. But so much for futurism; let us look at some of the immediate benefits of playgardens.

Most of the time, children are confined in artificial, highly structured environments which constrain their natural curiosity and freedom. Traditional playgrounds are user-*un* friendly: the accident rate in them is unacceptable. Risk taking is an important part of physical development, yet the consequence of failing in a 'hard' environment is serious injury, or at least punishment for damage to property caused by the children. Natural playgardens, in contrast, provide positive outlets for physical challenge with far less risk. Bushes and natural groundcover generally prevent serious injury to kids, while damaged plants usually recover without much drama. Also, vegetation can be placed so as to slow children down and therefore reduce collisions.

But organic play environments also liberate parents. In a conventional playground, a mother must constantly be on her toes: "Watch me", "Push me", "Help me". When my children were small, I would avoid traditional playgrounds because the 'passive' equipment, like roundabouts or swings, required me to do most of the work. For example, I would have

to check a slide for cuts in the sheet metal, then stand underneath while the children climbed up the potentially lethal ladder that invariably protruded from a jagged concrete footing, and then run like heck to catch them before they landed in the mud puddle at the bottom of the slide - again, and again, and again. In a playgarden, the equipment is designed for the children to do the work, giving mothers a chance to relax, socialize, and perhaps plot the overthrow of Patriarchy. Also, playgardens provide a sanctuary where we can all seek respite from our primary rôle as a segment of the market.

Sometimes residents oppose playgrounds in their immediate vicinity because they are unsightly and attract vandals (even children, heaven forbid). These people may seem petty, but they have a valid point. Most traditional playgrounds are ugly. They tend to detract visually from the surrounding natural and built environment. Some playground advocates argue that this does not matter as "playgrounds are for kids". Kids are apparently not supposed to have taste. I do not believe this is so. While children may enjoy exploring a junk yard or alley, there is no reason to design play environments to replicate them, if only because our urban environments already offer those experiences. Playgardens, however, do not conflict with the surrounding architectural setting because they blend into the landscaping and thus complement the built environment.

There are also benefits from the *process* of building community playgardens. For instance, a home-grown playgarden is something constructive (literally and figuratively) that any and every parent can do, while directly providing and caring for their own children. It has to help childrens' self-esteem to see their parents involved in a community-building activity meant for especially for them. Home-grown playgarden projects also set an example of self-reliance, and of taking responsibility for the community and the shared public environment. Finally, they demonstrate a creative approach to environmental design. Children and their parents can, and often do, participate in the design process, as well as in construction.

### **The importance of free play**

There is a substantial body of literature on the importance of free or exploratory play to the child's cognitive and physical development (beginning with such people as Piaget, Montessori and Steiner). Therefore, I will discuss only how play environments affect social development.

A child's self esteem is in part shaped by experiences at play. Organized sports are necessarily competitive, which reinforces a 'them versus us' attitude and a judgmental social milieu. Only the few most physically assertive individuals can excel in a particular event. Childrens' ability and ranking in a sport can affect their confidence and give them a sense that they belong in a certain stratum on a scale of worth. Also, sports do not encourage us to appreciate the range of different kinds of abilities which children have.

I do not oppose competitive sports *per se* ; that would not be realistic. Despite their tendency to promote tribalism, aggression, commercialism, and social hierarchy, they also have positive benefits, perhaps. However, as a society, we have a right to alternatives that nurture cooperative play and self expression, foster self-esteem, and recognize the diversity of ability among individuals. Children play: that is their job. That is how they learn. When we provide play environments for children, we are telling them they are important for being what they are, not for how they score.

Another social attribute of playgardens is that, unlike most toys and commercial recreation, they bring whole families and different age groups together. This is especially so where the play space is within the neighborhood itself. In contrast, the objective of most recreation planning by the private sector is to divide the market. Ever more specialized equipment and accessories are marketed, usually by associating athletic achievement with sexual and social success.

But play experiences not only affect self-esteem, they affect children's social development and attitudes. Studies have corroborated what is obvious to any interested observer: childrens' ways of interacting with one another vary with the design of the play environment. In traditional playgrounds, I have observed my own, as well as other children wanting to use a certain item of equipment, *only if and when* other children were on it. They can hardly be blamed for this when one considers the typical layout of the equipment. The design guidelines in former literature called for setting play equipment apart to avoid conflict; but in fact, segregating the equipment seems to generate conflict, as children must take turns to use it.

By contrast, in an organic playgarden, where children explore a network of structures among the bushes and trees that facilitate interconnected play activity, children begin to create games with others they have never met before, actively seeking out the involvement of others in cooperative games. I am sure the difference is measurable, were empiricists interested in studying real life. There are several factors which alter the way children relate in a playgarden. First, the equipment is that which requires the children to do the moving, rather than to be entertained. Second, integrating vegetation multiplies the ways in which the network of activities can be used; for example, a play circuit can also become a maze. Third, a playgarden is a complex environment, rather than a set of isolated items of equipment. Because of these factors, cooperative games such as hide and seek, nature observation, or creating cubbies occur naturally.

Another factor affecting social relationships is that the equivalent of 'equipment' in a playgarden is designed to be used by different children in different ways as they grow in size and ability. This means all ages can play together. Further, because playgardens are botanically complex, they are interesting enough for adults to explore. By 'inviting' parents to

play with children, playgardens can bring families together in fun. This encourages maximum usage, activity, and security.

By now one must be asking "what does socialization in playgardens have to do with environmentalism?" Well, no matter how effective we may be, it is our children who will be deciding the fate of the last remnants of the natural world, assuming we can slow down the rate of destruction sufficiently. The importance of children's well being to the future cultural and natural environment is something which mainstream environmental theory and practice has not yet fully taken on board. Children's emotional security and affinity with the natural environment is perhaps more important in shaping their disposition towards nature than their intellectual understanding of the environmental crisis, or the place of nature in their little cosmological frameworks.

Although it would be difficult to prove, I personally believe that when children are denied meaningful early experiences *in* nature, it is crippling to their personal development - comparable to being deprived of physical affection early in life. No amount of intellectual or metaphysical teaching can inculcate a caring identification with nature in children: it must be felt. For instance, we all know many adults who understand the environmental crisis intellectually, but do nothing. In fact, some green scholars or experts, while capitalizing on the current interest in the environment, are not willing to put themselves or their professional reputation on the front line. This is because there is no direct correlation between comprehending a problem and acting to resolve it. But while there is no correlation between *knowing* and acting, there is a correlation between *caring* and acting. And research has established a link between the child's early experience of the natural environment and a caring and responsible attitude toward nature.<sup>1</sup>

### The opposition to play environments

Having hopefully established the virtues of creative play environments - and especially playgardens - over traditional playgrounds, I would like to substantiate the link between androcentrism, or our over-masculinized culture, and opposition to play environments. In a more gender-balanced world, the process of building a little local play environment would surely be a simple, straightforward activity. However, in a Patriarchy, it is not so easy. In fact, I have found it harder to implement a small community playgarden than a residential or commercial structure.

To take just one among myriad examples, the local education department sat on a set of construction drawings for six months and (allegedly) told the school principal they had."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Louise Chawla, 1988, "Children's Concern for the Natural Environment", *Children's Environments Quarterly* 6 (3) pp. 13-20.

queries and safety concerns" about the project. To interfere in the contractual relations of an architect and a client is a serious matter, yet the superintendent refused to communicate with me on the matter and merely answered my letters with a curt note saying they were giving the school "expert professional" advice. However, when I went in person to the department to find out what these problems were, I discovered that no one there had even reviewed the plans yet. Six months later, they had still not reviewed the plans. Finally, and after much time invested by the parents inquiring as to the status of the plans, they were approved and released without any criticisms and perhaps without anyone having examined them. (I suspect that no one in the Department had either the ability or interest to evaluate the plans.) The delay was simply to discourage the parents from building any play environment, under the unfounded presumption that playgrounds of *any* sort mean trouble.

Similarly, on other projects, parents have had to contend with rumours to the effect that it "would never be built". I even overheard someone say this about a project I designed some weeks after it was completed! Such derision (usually by men) can undermine the group's confidence (usually nearly all women), especially when they lack experience in construction.

One could argue that the undermining of playground projects has to do with either my personal inadequacies, or even with plain old sexism - as opposed to Patriarchy. But if that were so, I would have had similar difficulties in positions I have held as an attorney, artist, architect or city planner.<sup>1</sup> I have found it far more difficult to get builders to follow playstructure plans than building plans, though my playgarden drawings are much more explicit and include step-by-step instructions.

Let me convey an idea of the frustrations involved in getting play structures built to plan. I have often come to inspect a play environment project and found serious and dangerous errors in construction. Queries as to why the builders have not followed the plans have generally been met with most peculiar excuses, like in one case: "Well this guy came along and said the way you had it was wrong. He suggested it would be better this way". When I looked quizzical, he added, "He seemed to know what he was talking about, he was some kind of engineer or something". Or, once I discovered that the roof of a gazebo-like play structure was built entirely wrong, even though I had explained the plans to the builder beforehand and he had understood. His response was: "Well, that's not the way we build rooves here, we do it like this".

My point is that the real problem is not sexism *per se*. It is that in Patriarchal society such projects and their proponents (male or female) are simply *not taken seriously*. Another example illustrates this well. A community arts officer obtained a grant for me to work as

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<sup>1</sup> That is not to say that sexism is passé. To take one of many examples, I was once asked not to talk to council workers as they would "resent taking instruction from a woman".



'artist in residence' for a community-participation in design project. She made arrangements with a small town which promised to fund the materials in exchange for free design services and other benefits from the grant. A site was agreed upon. A few months later, when the project was scheduled to begin, we arrived to discover some expensive equipment had been purchased and placed smack in the middle of the site - the only suitable site in town. Far more money was spent on that equipment than the Council was willing to allocate to the local community for building materials, even though the residents agreed to provide the labor *free*. Half way into the three month project, the Council was still unable to agree to provide an alternative site. Two sites that were later picked were rescinded by the Council after I had designed play environments for them.

As far as we could tell, the Town Clerk and Council simply refused to take the playground project seriously because it was seen as of, for, and by women, even though some of the women had enlisted their husband's participation. These officials wasted our time and energy with that cold, mindless, disinterest with which a cat toys with a mouse. (A far cry from the way such Patriarchs purred at me when I was in charge of major project review in a large City Planning Department and empowered to stop projects!)

Home-grown play environments are always underfunded, and this promotes a self-fulfilling prophesy. School department policy, at least here in Tasmania, is generally to let parent/teacher organizations raise money for play equipment; after all, "it keeps them out of mischief". When a self-help project is permitted, they will not contribute the amount of funds they sometimes allocate for commercial equipment. (It is a situation parallel to that of decentralized solar energy applications, which have had to compete with energy sources that have enormous subsidies on all levels of production and distribution.) Because creative play environments have to operate on a shoestring with volunteer labor, problems inevitably arise due to, for example, the most interested participants moving on to new jobs or new places.

The fact that playgrounds are not taken seriously, however, does not explain why Patriarchs so often oppose creative play environments that are good value *economically*. I will now explain why the 'reasons' generally given for opposing such projects do not stand up to common sense. This being the case, I submit that only an emotional, subconscious, reaction (largely centred upon gender identification) can explain the extreme disinterest or overt opposition of so many Patriarchs to play environments. We will now look at the reasons for not building playgrounds that I have most often encountered.

### **The reasons given for opposing creative play environments**

#### **Safety and liability**

It is not necessarily the case, as many officials contend, that play environments are inherently unsafe and therefore undesirable from a public policy standpoint. Soccer fields

often have far more serious injuries than creative play environments, yet they are made of a soft grass carpet upon soil. Still, you never hear of the construction of soccer fields (which invariably cost more than playgardens) being opposed on grounds of safety. But creative play environments and playgardens are tarred with the bad record of traditional playgrounds and commercial equipment.

Play environments custom-designed by specialists have a safer track record than these. Nonetheless, many officials argue against creative play environments in favor of conventional equipment, on grounds that the latter are more 'maintenance free'. Concrete at the base of equipment, splintered logs, torn sheet metal, and worn bearings belie this view. Any mother who has visited a public playground can see they are unsafe and in need of maintenance. In fact, *any* outdoor public environment needs a regular schedule of maintenance and budgets always include maintenance costs for other forms of equipment. To avoid the idea of conforming management practices to that reality is to sit in a corner and try not to think of a white elephant.

Liability is also used as an excuse for not replacing dangerous traditional playgrounds with far safer play environments. Of course, any public place can host a serious accident; there have likewise been law suits by ladies who have caught high heels in sidewalk cracks. But that does not mean, as a Tasmanian parks and recreation official declared at a conference on playgrounds, that the threat of law suits prevents public servants from "getting on with their job". Law suits generally concern injuries due to demonstrable negligence such as concrete under swings, which is still a common feature here in Tasmania. In fact, it seems to be often only law suits that force some officials to do their job - which is after the requisite human sacrifice has occurred. When an official argued that he could not afford funds for a program to remove the concrete under swings, I suggested the professional staff could roll up their shirt sleeves, rent jack hammers, and fix the problem in a day themselves. But concrete was still to be found under swings many years later, perhaps because of a dearth of law suits. The law is not, in reality, the problem: liability in playgrounds can be avoided by professional design, and a systematic schedule of maintenance which demonstrate 'due care', rather than by inaction.

### Lack of demand

There is constant demand from mothers for new, well-designed, play environments. On several occasions, however, school principals or local officials took up my time to discuss a possible project, only (I later discovered) to get "all those mothers" off their backs. They considered themselves to have performed their duty of 'considering' a play environment, while actually 'listening' was not seen as part of their obligation.

By Patriarchal logic, there is no demand for play environments because traditional playgrounds are not very well used. But it should be asked: "why not?" . Mothers have known for years that these playgrounds are dangerous (concrete under swings), unpleasant (metal slides in direct sun), dreary (a penitentiary of bars) and boring (about four things to do on average). Traditional playgrounds are not interesting; they insult the intelligence of children. But it has apparently not occurred to most officials that low usage is the outcome of poor design.

A city official once said to me: "who needs a playground? Children are like dogs, you throw a ball, they chase it". Because the developmental and social aspects of play have been undervalued, design for play has not been taken seriously either. Hence little thought, money, or energy has been invested in the design of play environments. To many, keeping kids off the street is still their only purpose, and if kids do not like playgrounds, or if they get hurt on them, the problem is taken to be a design flaw in children, not in the design of the playgrounds.

### Vandalism

I had designed some wood playstructures in the heart of low-income communities in California that were not appreciably vandalized. Although designed as temporary structures for temporary daycare centres in rented properties, they far outlived their life expectancies. When I moved to Tasmania, someone therefore suggested I call the local housing department, because they were having trouble with vandalism and might appreciate some advice. I phoned and asked for an appointment, but when I told them I was a playground designer, they literally laughed in my face and refused to give me an appointment.

One of the gentlemen said they were greatly impressed with a play environment I had designed locally, but that they dealt with 'tough' neighborhoods, where vandalism was a serious problem. Therefore, he said, they were only interested in 'durable' commercial equipment from interstate sources. When I responded that I had heard their equipment had been continuously vandalized, he said "yes, but they used blow-torches, wenches, and explosives". But if vandals rise to any challenge, it is perhaps not the strength of materials that count in reducing vandalism. Ease of repair and cost of replacement materials are also important. Similarly, prisons designed to be vandal proof have been torn apart and even abandoned, such as the Jika Jika prison in Australia. (But then, if we want to develop resourceful prisoners, the traditional playground may be an appropriate training ground, after all.)

### Value

Some bureaucrats seem to assume that commercial playgrounds are better value for money. But commercial multi-function playstructures do not really offer much to do. They only

facilitate physical development. Also, they are materials-intensive and generate little employment. If you compare creative play environments and playgrounds by the amount of play activity per unit of money, the former would win hands down anytime.

But cost is not the real issue. Councils and bureaucrats do not hesitate to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on other forms of recreation. Certainly, other projects, such as sport fields, generate revenue. However, while these turn money over and therefore increase 'GDP',<sup>1</sup> they do not produce goods or services as such, other than entertainment. Though children are our most important product, they must compete for crumbs. I remember a TV news item in which much civic pride was evinced in spending literally millions of dollars fixing a dangerous curb on a racetrack. This was back-to-back with an item about a playground which cost ten thousand dollars, a fact presented with a clear tone of disapproval. In a Patriarchy, 'toys for the boys' take precedence over living, breathing children.

Playgrounds can be very expensive when they are designed for the prestige of sculptors, craftsmen, or civic officials, or to enhance the appearance of a housing project. Playgrounds seem to need to justify their existence on grounds having little to do with children, and thus often fail to take into account the needs of children as well.

### **The real reasons for opposing play environments**

I have suggested that the arguments given by bureaucrats and officials for not building creative play environments do not stand up to scrutiny. There is, I believe, an unconscious factor in operation that is preventing a rational, objective consideration of the subject by so many of the Patriarchs I have encountered in my forays into officialdom. Allow me to suggest some of the underlying reasons for the subconscious opposition to community-built play environments - reasons which all relate back to those 'masculine' attributes we are taught to admire in a Western society.

### **Separation of people and nature**

Many in the construction profession have been molded into an engineering mentality. They think society can be shaped to fit efficient, functional spaces devoid of messy, uncontrollable, living things. Designing urban play environments that incorporate nature seems like the obvious thing to do, but there is an entrenched belief that plants and people do not mix. The false Western view of Man as autonomous and independent of nature, is reinforced by an image of nature as scenery or a mere stage set for human activity.

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<sup>1</sup> See Helen Henderson, 1978, *Creating Alternative Futures* (NY: Berkeley) and Marilyn Waring, 1988, *Counting for nothing: What Men Value and What Women are Worth* (London: Allen & Unwin).

Also, there persists the sentiment that unkempt nature in our very midsts is somehow dangerous. An official who was afraid children could trip on ivy seemed oblivious to the danger of concrete slabs. Another government playground official, who had not bothered to visit a local, organic play environment I had designed several years earlier, said quite confidently that the project proved the idea of mixing plants and children could not work. In fact, the planting had thrived (at least the plant survival rate was far higher than that of my own garden). The project had become a 'play-jungle' according to design.

Being aloof from their own children and forgetting their own childhoods, many officials fail to realize that if a kid is swinging on a monkey bar or balancing on a beam over sticky bushes, the game naturally becomes to avoid falling on the plants. Bushes on an empty field, in contrast, can be a fun 'obstacle course' to slalom over on bikes. The two contexts are simply quite different.

### Linear thinking

Because playgrounds have been poorly designed, they are not used or appreciated much; therefore, they are not given much thought, time, or money. We do not ask the right questions - mother's questions. I often use the following example of how intellectual numbness can be caused by excessive Patriarchy. A play environment project in San Francisco was resisted by the Parks and Recreation Department because the existing one was "safer" and they "had to worry about complex problems like liability". However, the records at the Department showed the accident rate there was very high, especially considering there was hardly any equipment; a set of four swings took up most of the space. According to the files, the children were injured simply because "they fell off". However, my interviews with children suggested there were two main causes of falls from swings; they "fell asleep" or "jumped off because they were bored". The official cause of injury was falls, the question of what caused the fall was not even asked.

### Appeal of authority

Officials and bureaucrats tend to believe what men representing big companies say over those who have studied children at play, such as mothers. I have often heard government officials repeating the sales line of company spokesmen *verbatim*. The companies have been quite aggressive in attacking community-built play environments. For example, they have been lobbying against the use of old tyres in playgrounds on the grounds that they can burn. Insurance companies, they say, will not ensure playgrounds that have tyres because of the fire hazard (or is it because of lobbying). Strangely enough, however, they do ensure parking lots. It is true, of course, that all equipment can become dangerous if not regularly inspected, as is the case of commercial equipment as well.

### Self-interest

I have designed playgrounds that literally cost a fraction of commercial equipment per unit of play activity. But value for money is not really the issue for officials, probably because it is not *their* money. Instead, they use money according to how it will enhance their own position in the Patriarchy, and getting along with the boys from the big companies is 'where it is at'.

In all fairness, there is one good reason for officials to avoid creative play environments: it is that playgrounds take more thought and energy on their part. It is easier to pull a catalogue off a shelf. It is also easy to *obstruct* a home-grown play environment and then say "that proves communities should not get involved" in the official's territory. Of course, insecurity and power cannot account for all the antics that our little friends get up to, but the drive for control and territory is no small part of it.

### **Play environments as a threat**

You must be asking, "but can play environments seriously be a threat to the Patriarchy? Surely they cannot bring about social change?" It is true, certainly, that proponents of play do not have the redistribution of power foremost in their minds. It is the *process* wherein the significance of home-grown play environments lies. Community self-help projects politicize and empower those who might not otherwise question Patriarchal structures, values, and life quality issues.

The innocent process of building a little community play environment works to educate, politicize and empower women. First, such projects *educate* women by direct exposure to androcentric thinking. Many entrapped 'housewives', after all, have formed their impressions about the public sphere through the heroic myths their husbands and fathers have brought home from the office. In implementing community projects, they encounter many hidden assumptions, for example: anything proposed by mothers is not to be taken seriously in the 'real world'; all children's and mothers' legitimate needs can be met by commercial products; public open space and art which does not generate income has no value; family activities that cannot be segregated into markets are frivolous.

Second, such projects *politicize* women by exposing them to the patent foolishness of Patriarchal officialdom. As I said, local bureaucrats who do not blink at spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on men's play environments, such as race tracks, stadiums, and casinos, will disdainfully ignore requests for a few hundred dollars for children who have nowhere to go and no way to get there. In short, the process of building home-grown playgardens exposes women to the contradictions of the Patriarchal psyche which militates against a humane and natural environment.

In nearly every project in which I have been involved, some mothers have indicated their dismay at the personal politics of Patriarchy. Those people previously assumed to be professional, mature decision makers, having regard to sound, reasoned analyses, were later seen as people motivated largely by personal insecurity and unmet emotional needs. One group was so disappointed at the shabby emotional and behavioural standards of the local officials that they stood candidates and won a seat on the Council!

Sometimes, of course, Patriarchs usurp the community design process, and when that happens the nature of the project changes. Suddenly the group transforms into key players and passive supporters. These leaders begin to relate defensively and competitively and the process ceases to be fun.

Third, the community-building process also *empowers* women, because such projects necessarily involve face-to-face democracy and skill sharing. Home-grown play environment projects empower women by allowing those who would not ordinarily play the games required to ascend in large organizations to develop skills and confidence. The process encourages cooperative actions and communal attitudes, and reduces dependency on service 'providers'. Although they may try, the male chauvinist cannot demonstrate superior knowledge regarding a mother's own needs that are to be accommodated in a family play environment.

What I have tried to show is something that is incapable of 'scientific' proof because it is a subject that is of little interest to those in the dominant paradigm and does not lend itself well to empirical research methodology. However, I suspect, it conforms to many parent's personal experience. Something that contributes to community and life quality, and has clear value in relation to cost, is nonetheless opposed quite irrationally by Patriarchs who are closed to other points of view and would rather exercise power than accommodate community needs. Home-grown playgarden projects are one form of direct action that provides for community building and creates a vehicle for face-to-face relationships between parents and those in the power structure.

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